

# BEAUTIFUL STORIES FROM THE BIBLE

THAT  
EVERYONE SHOULD KNOW









Mrs Isaiah Pottinger

Halifax.  
Pa.

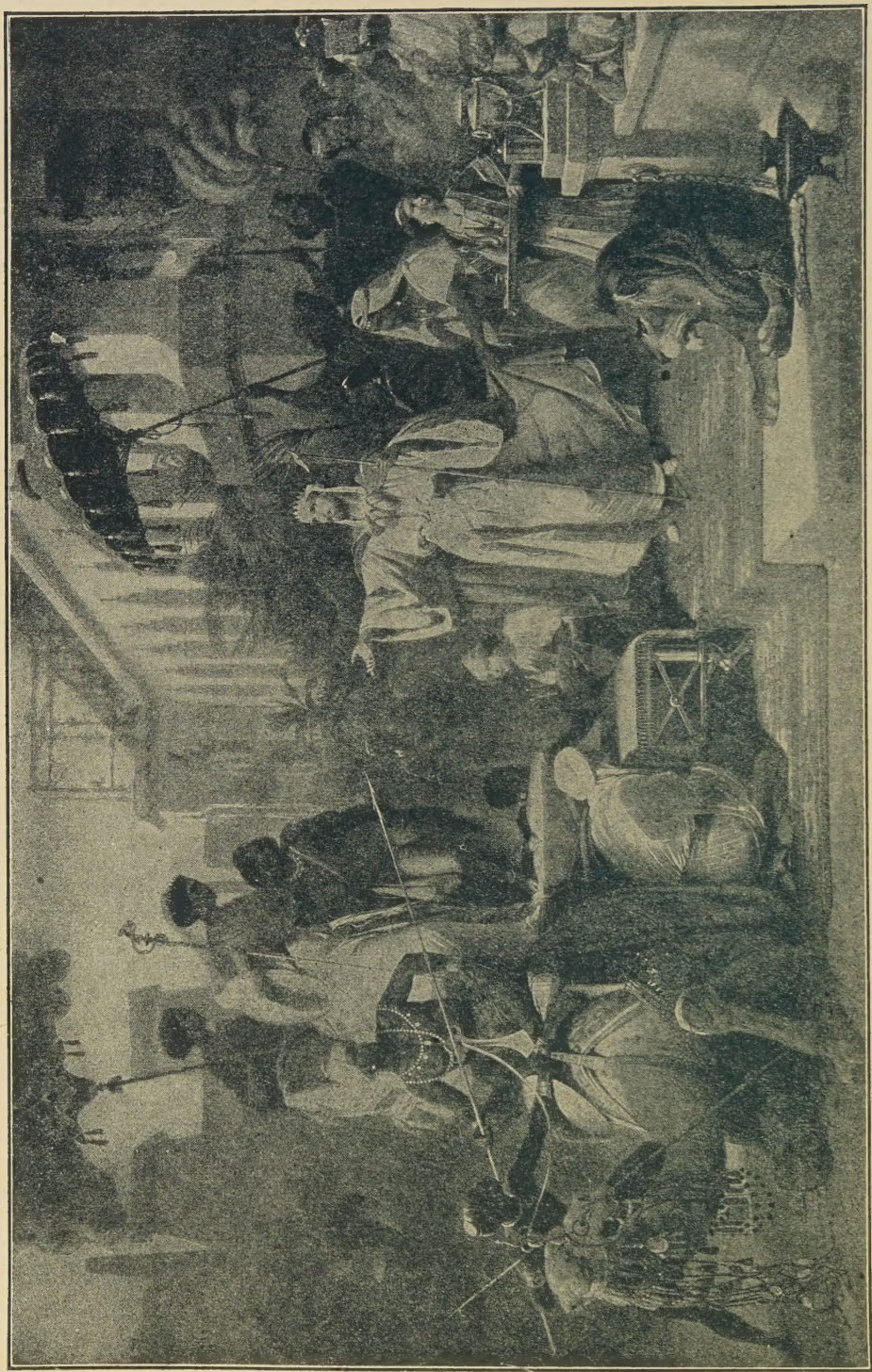




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THE QUEEN OF SHEBA VISITING SOLOMON.



# BEAUTIFUL STORIES

## FROM THE BIBLE

THAT EVERY ONE SHOULD KNOW

A Volume that tells in Story-form of to-day the GREAT TRUTHS, IMPORTANT FACTS and INSPIRING EVENTS of the Bible. A connected narrative turned into charming, captivating stories, told lovingly and reverently and shedding new light and better explaining the great teachings of the Book of Books.

A Book that will delight the Young, interests the Older People, help the Mother to entertain the Children. A guide for the Sunday-School Teacher that turns the lesson into an interesting story, full of the adventure, romance and poetry of Bible Times.

OVER TWO HUNDRED HALF TONE ILLUSTRATIONS  
FROM PHOTOGRAPHS

Showing the Holy Land to-day and reproductions of the World's most Famous Pictures in which the Greatest Artists of the World have depicted, the Notable Characters and Interesting Events of Bible Times.

By REV. JOHN RUSK, D. D.

Author of "Stories of Christ and The Apostles," etc., etc.

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## INTRODUCTION

EVERY introduction to a book gives the spirit of the theme.

The book I am about to introduce to you is an *oratorio*, containing songs, battles, burials, triumphs, and hallelujahs of a world. We go back and gaze on the chaos of time—not a note thrills the air, not a footprint marks the path. The Garden of Eden and the father and mother of our race alike charm and move us to tears. The beginning of civilization had its birth as remote and obscure as the springs which foster our greatest rivers. In the pages before you, temples rise where once forests held sway; cities reclaim swamps which were once barren and dismal.

All these things are but evidences of the inner fact, that there is a spiritual force at work in man, bringing all truth to light. This inner life is born, trained, and strengthened by the Lord, as manifested in the characters of the heroes and heroines of the Bible. These show *why* the Bible differs from ordinary history. God's Word is the everlasting fact—more read to-day than at any time in its history. No man, woman, or child can claim to be a scholar who is not familiar with the Book of Books, which sets forth the eternal history of soul life.

We find, as we read, that frequently something seems to be missing. There is good reason for this, though we may not be able to see it. It is like going through a building and seeing places reserved for doors and windows. The doors and windows are not there—they are missing. It is plain that the architect made preparations for a possible enlargement of the building at some time. It was in his original plan. In like manner we see that the Bible skips, now and then, a connecting link. Things end suddenly. Big foundations lead us to feel that more is yet to come. Yes, that is right. In heaven above, the broken link will be reunited; the prophecy of all things will be fulfilled. We shall be disappointed in nothing. All the unrealized hopes here will be fulfilled there. The lost thoughts, the unsung music, and departed friends are all awaiting us.

Who has ever been able to write stories such as we find in the sacred record? Some have been written in finer style, *but style cannot give eternal life to story*. A marble statue is more precise than a living being, but there is a vast gulf between the two.

A great writer once said to a skeptic: "I can write a story equal in power to the Prodigal Son." The skeptic replied: "I will wager you a certain sum you cannot." Over one hundred years have elapsed, yet the story has never been written, although the writer accepted the wager. Centuries have been enriched by the story of the Prodigal Son. More lost women have been brought to repentance by it than by all other methods. We glory in the Rescue Homes, but the story of the prodigal "who was lost and is found, was dead and is alive again" is over and over again reclaiming souls. We can copy pictures, statuary, and architecture, but never the story of the Prodigal Son. Why? Because God's spirit is in it.

That is why the Bible is imperishable. Its domain is grander and broader than any literature ever written. The visions which came to Solomon are similar to those which come to each and every one who looks to God. Solomon chose Wisdom. Let us see what the inspired Word says of wisdom: "The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and to depart from evil is understanding."

It is hoped that the stories in this volume may cultivate a great love for God's word, "whose leaves are for the healing of all nations." Forget not its teachings, and your own peace of mind will be the author's reward.

JOHN RUSK.



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# BEAUTIFUL STORIES FROM THE BIBLE THAT EVERYONE SHOULD KNOW

## CHAPTER I

### WORLD BUILDING

I WISH every one could read the Bible in its original language. It is rich in word pictures and musical in sound. Even in the English it is a stately march. One paragraph reads: "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth; and the earth was without form and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep." There are other accounts of the beginning of the world, but they are in wide contrast to this strong and brief statement.



The word "create" is applied only to God. It can never be applied to any one except Him. It means to give life to something new. When we speak of any one else producing anything, we say, he *made* it. But when we speak of God, we say, He *created* it. There

is a vast difference between *creating* a thing and *making* it.

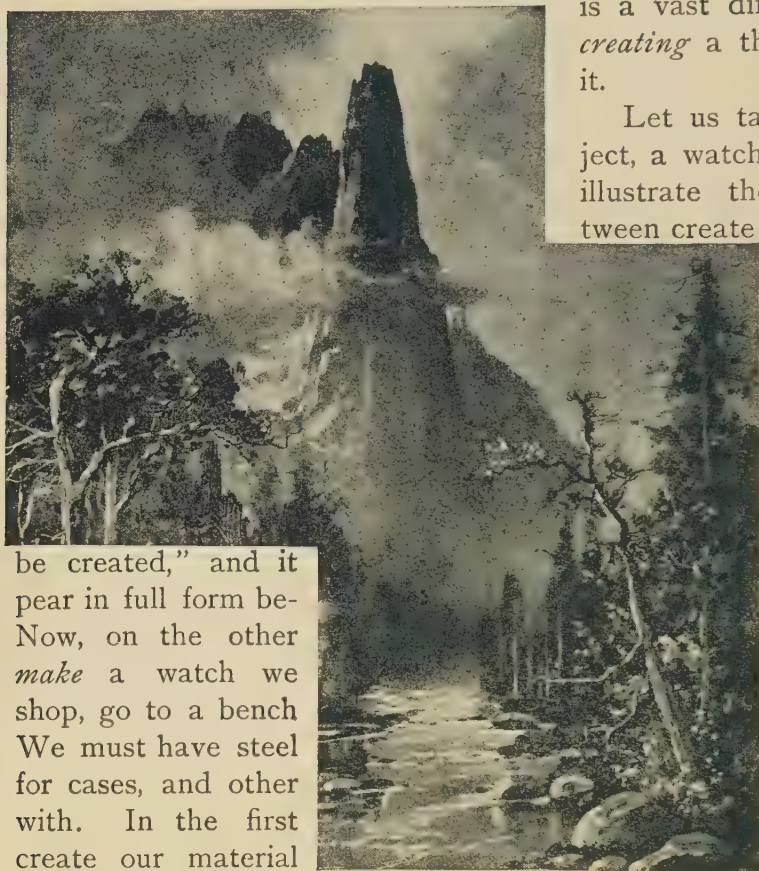
Let us take a familiar object, a watch for instance, to illustrate the difference between create and make. Had

we the power to *create* a watch, we would need only to stand in the open air at any point in the world and say, "Let a watch would then appear before our eyes. hand, when we must enter a and begin work. for springs, gold material to work instance we must and the watch

be created," and it appear in full form before our eyes. Now, on the other *make* a watch we shop, go to a bench. We must have steel for cases, and other with. In the first create our material also, for nothing about it, from spring to case, has ever existed in the world before.

Such was the case when God began to build worlds. He created the material for the worlds before he put them into shape. All the worlds, stars and planets were once gases. The word gas includes all the elements which form air, water, steam, ice, snow, gold, iron, silver and other solids.

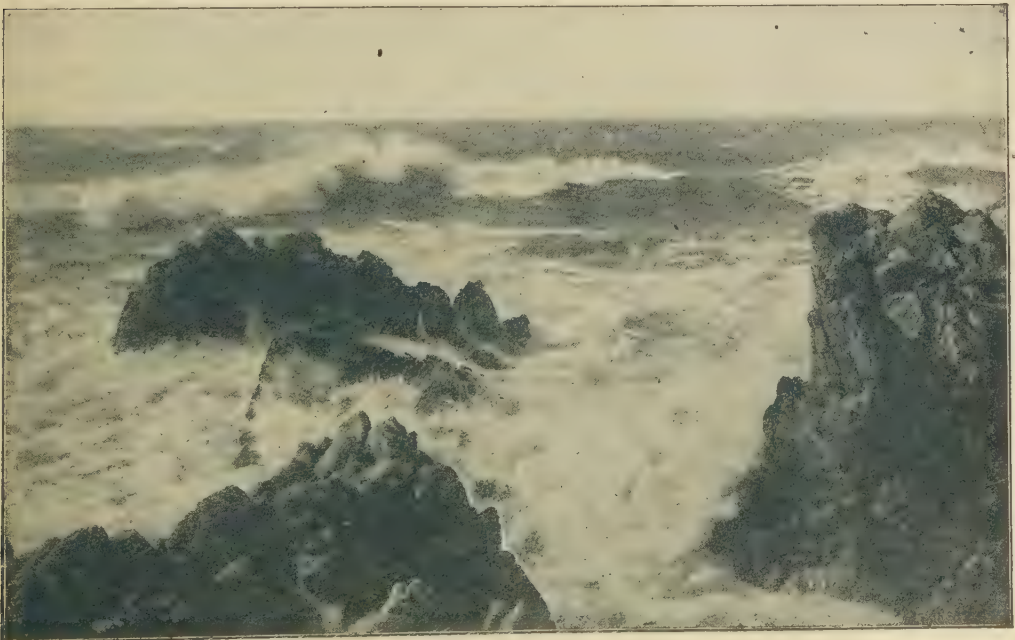
We cannot see the gas which forms air, water or steam; but the formation of water shows us how the invisible becomes visible. Water



in its natural condition we call a liquid; the particles move easily one upon another; we can dip it; we can pour it; and no matter how we turn the vessel containing the water, the top is always level. When we apply cold, or take away heat, which is the same thing, the water freezes and becomes ice, and is then a solid; it cannot be dipped or poured. It can be heated, however, and again converted into water. We can heat it still more and it becomes so fine as to pass away out of sight, as in the case when it boils; but it will all return, as dew, rain, snow, hail or fog. A piece of iron is a solid; it cannot be poured or dipped. If we apply sufficient heat it can be melted and become a liquid. If we apply still more heat it can be converted into gases, which will pass away out of sight just as the gases from the water; but they will all return again as elements of iron.

Now, the minerals of the earth—such as iron, silver, gold and precious stones—were once gases. Bringing them together is WORLD BUILDING.

The rocks were broken by the atmospheric heat of summer and cold of winter, forming sand. Out of the waters came clay. The decay of animals, fishes, vegetables, flowers, grasses and trees, mingling with the sand and the clay, formed soil. This is soil making.





It has not taken long to say these things, but it took many ages to do them. The word "day" does not mean one of twenty-four hours, as we term a day; it means an age—a cycle of time. It makes no difference how we view this word "day," however, so long as we honor God. Seven creative days are mentioned in the Bible, meaning seven great eras of time.

Another thing, let us remember that nothing is still in the world; everything moves and vibrates, even the solid rocks. God made movement to be the order of this great universe.

You will remember that in the first verse of the Bible God brings our attention to the earth, which is said to have been without form, empty, and covered with impenetrable darkness. The first thing we notice is that God's spirit was brooding over the world. He did not use hands or body as mortal man does. The power of his mind was such that he formed the world into shape by thinking about it. So when God said, "Let there be light," which was the first command, he moved the world by thinking. The light referred to is not that light which comes from the sun, moon and stars, but a light which comes by movement. The motion in the earth itself and its atmosphere caused light. The earth passed away from its condition of darkness. That ended the first age of the world. When that was done God named the light day, and the darkness night. The world was void and empty. Great clouds clothed it about, and beneath the fog and mist rolled the heaving waters. The land was buried beneath the seas. What storms swept the deep no man can tell!

The *second* day or age was given over to the creation of a firmament or atmosphere. Nothing could live till there was air. When the atmosphere was formed, a division of the waters was made. The visible waters were confined to the earth, and the finer waters—such as clouds and invisible moisture—floated in the open sky of heaven. God said: "Let the waters be gathered together into one place and let the dry land appear."

By taking a map of the world and repeating the verse we have mentioned, geography will have a new meaning. We can then realize in what shape God formed the land and the sea.

The *third* day was devoted to the grasses and early form of vegetable life. Until the sun shone in his glory upon the earth, only the

lower forms of vegetable life could exist. After the sun came, then appeared the glory of cereals, forest and flowers.

We think well of the tree that bears fruit, of the field golden with grain, and are pleased with the flowers which meet our eyes. We gaze in admiration upon the noble forest, but often forget the grass which lies beneath our feet. There never was a greater sentence, "The earth brought forth grass." God also endued the earth with power to bring forth year after year the forest, the grain, and the grass.

The *fourth* day was taken up with the adjustment of the great system of suns and their planets. These are for signs, for seasons, for days and years.

The earth being round, each portion as it revolves on its axis is brought to the face of the sun. When in this position, it is day; when it is away from the sun, it is night.

The movement of the earth also brings about winter and summer. The inclination of the earth toward the sun and its position in its orbit give us the seasons.

The stars not only give light but serve as signs to the traveler by sea and land. The sun is man's great clock. By determining what meridian we are on—that is, what time the earth meets the sun at a given place at noon—and placing a telescope on that imaginary line, we can see what seems to be the sun moving in splendor across the field of vision. It is not the sun, however, which is moving, but the earth. Men talk of races—yacht races, horse races, etc.—but no race-course in the world ever compared in splendor with the race of the stars. If we stand at night where we can see the stars come into view one by one, they will appear as celestial steeds coming out of their hidden stable, then off and away they go down the splendid race-course of heaven.

God uses the stars to fix great events. They herald the seasons, mark the days and chronicle the years.

The earth, compared in size to the stars and suns, is like a grain of sand; yet we are glad to say its destiny rests not on its size but on its quality. Quality is what makes it great, though small in size. On the fourth day all the stars, suns and planets were arranged in their several systems. We belong to the sun system, which is called the Solar System. The sun is in the centre, around which the earth revolves.



"THE KING'S DAUGHTER IS ALL GLORIOUS WITHIN."

*Psalm XLV 12*



It is located in the heavens, giving forth light and power, thus sustaining animal and vegetable life.

Take a leaf, for instance. It is full of vessels and fibres which draw not only the moisture from the soil, taking it up into the stem, but it is full of pores which open and shut with every change of weather, thus transmitting the light of the sun, 90,000,000 of miles away, and converting it into the fruit of the plant.

On the *fifth* day God moved in majesty over the rivers, lakes, and seas, causing the bird to outspread its wings in the sky, and the waters to swarm with life. While many of the great species of life which formerly frequented the rivers and seas, have passed from our sight, yet an abundance remains.

The first half of the *sixth* day was given to the creating of those animals which come nearest to man and are most essential to his needs.

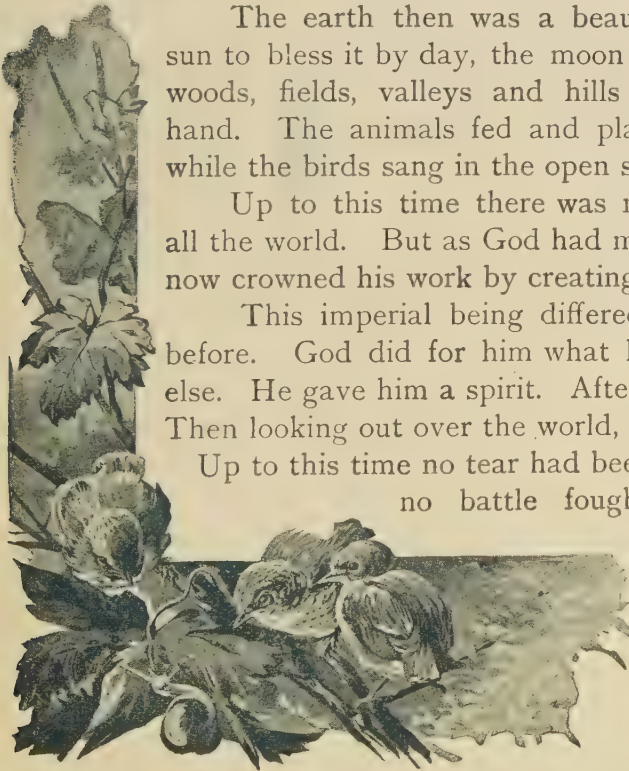
The earth then was a beautiful palace. It had the sun to bless it by day, the moon and stars by night. The woods, fields, valleys and hills were scattered on every hand. The animals fed and played in the wooded fields, while the birds sang in the open sky of heaven.

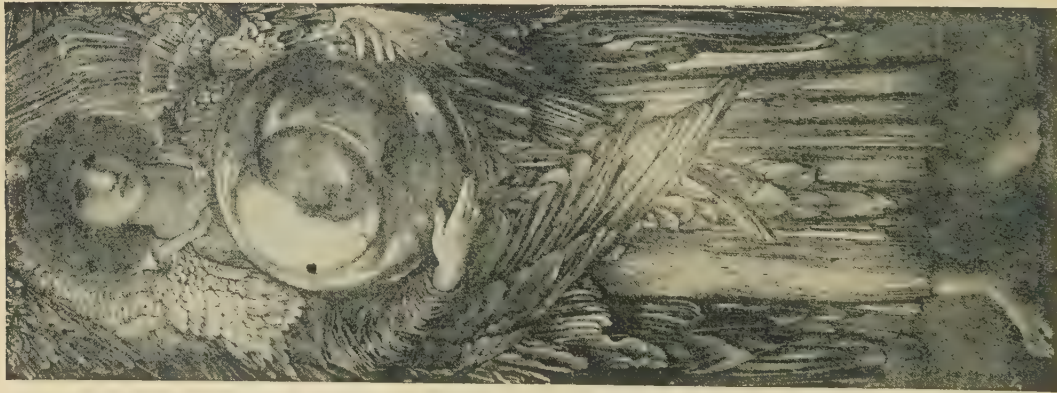
Up to this time there was neither man nor woman in all the world. But as God had made the earth for man, he now crowned his work by creating man.

This imperial being differed from all that had gone before. God did for him what he did not do for anything else. He gave him a spirit. After this he created a woman. Then looking out over the world, he said, "It is very good."

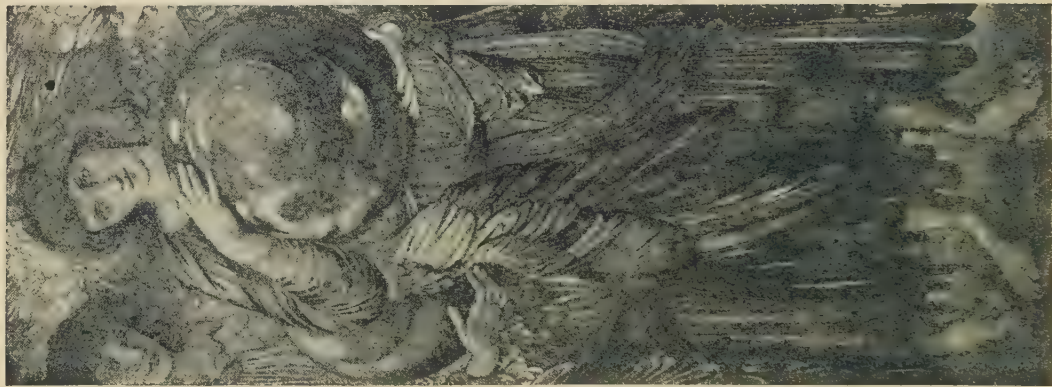
Up to this time no tear had been shed, no sin committed, no battle fought. Death had left no sorrow.

The plains were the plains of peace and man like an angel dwelt in paradise.

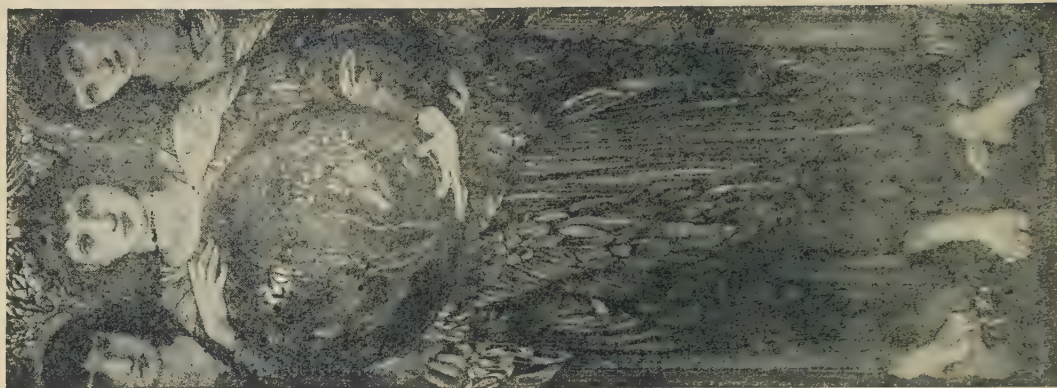




"And God said, Let there be light; and there was light."

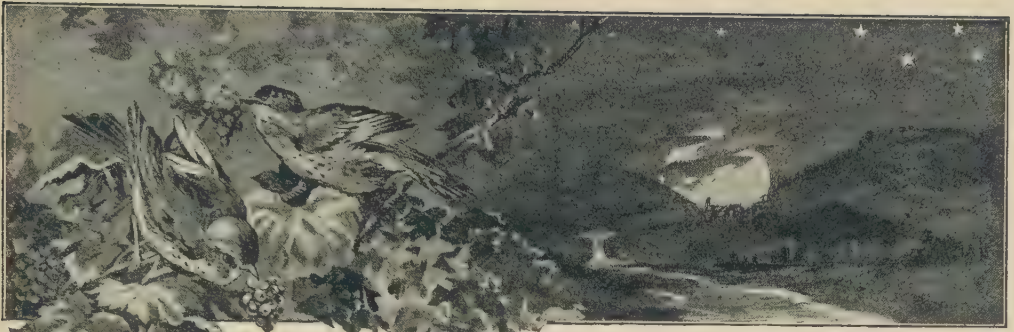


"And God made the firmament."



"And the earth brought forth grass."





## CHAPTER II

### EVE; OR THE MOTHER OF MANKIND

THERE was a time when the earth, though complete in all physical characteristics—such as running streams, growing trees, singing birds, and shining stars—had no human eye to see its beauty, nor human ear to hear its melody. Could we then have walked through its length and breadth, we would have noticed that everything seemed to have been made for man and his requirements. The next thing God did was to complete his great design by creating man and placing him over all in the earth.

There is a vast difference between a plant and an animal and between an animal and a man. This comes to view in the *creation*. Man's body, like that of an animal, is made of flesh and blood, created from the dust of the earth. He has breath, so has the animal. Man, however, has one thing the animal has not—that is, a *spirit*.

The life in the man and in the animal are the same. There is a power between life and spirit—that power is mind. The man has mind, the animal has mind. The tiny ant, even though small, can think; it has an army, slaves, and dairies, and because of these it must have a government which declares war and peace. This is mind of a fair type. Mind is *almost* spirit, but it is *not* spirit; it is a material finer than life, but not so fine as spirit or soul.

This is illustrated by the registry of a letter. The clerk at the



postoffice takes a book of printed blanks and on one of these writes a receipt, handing it to the sender. While writing, he puts just beneath the page an indelible sheet. By the means of this a second receipt is traced on a white form further within the book. This he keeps. The inner sheet represents the spirit of man which the animal and ant have not. The spirit remains after the mind is still, thus showing that man is different from and higher than all other life. When God gave him a spirit he called that "making man in His image and His likeness."

We can, perhaps, more fully illustrate spirit by the following story: A girl has a great, big, noble dog, with which she plays. They accompany each other everywhere, often falling asleep together on the floor, her head resting on his great shaggy body. He, though dumb, is yet sympathetic. What is he thinking about when looking up into her eyes?

After a time the girl's circle of acquaintance widens. She forms friendships, goes to school, writes essays, loves, marries, and presides with queenly grace over her household, becoming the soul of the conversation at the table. The home bears the mark of her cultured mind; she enters upon large plans of benevolence; she appears before vast bodies of women, addressing them on topics affecting the great interests of the day; she advises her husband wisely and comforts him when deep in the midst of large affairs. Though young, she is a great woman. At last she falls ill, and just at a time when the scent of flowers is filling a glorious May morning with delight, she passes into glory. Just a little while before she wings her flight toward the celestial country, her partly closed eyes view the loved ones who have passed beyond and who come about to welcome her to her new home in glory land.

See how vastly different man is from anything else, whether animal, plant, or bird. Man became, like the animal, a living thing; but, like God, a spirit.

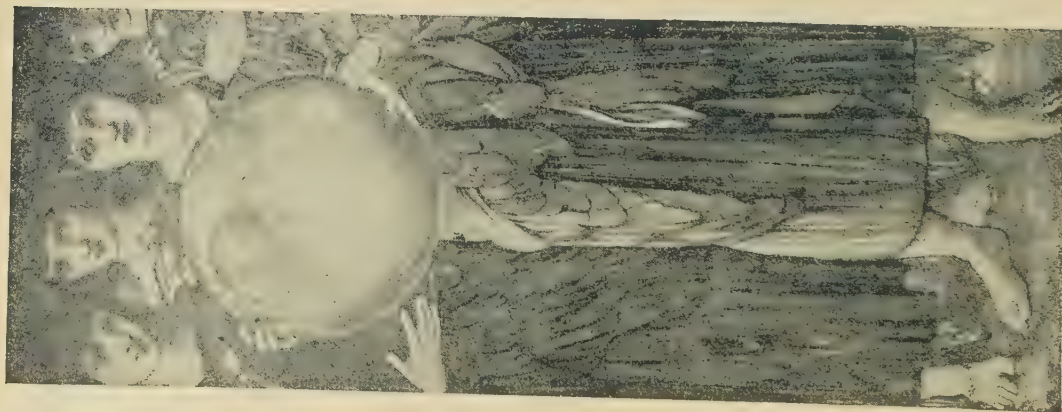
When God created man he designed a special home for his dwelling-place. It was Eden, the choicest place of all the world. Undoubtedly, it was on the Babylonian plains, for through it flowed four sparkling rivers. Many attempts have been made to find the exact location, but evidently God intended to hide its whereabouts, for he changed conditions so that no one from that day to this has been

able to find it. Some have placed it at the North Pole. The earth was different then than now. It was warmer at the surface because of internal heat. Besides this, the inclination of the earth's axis has changed. The two things have so altered the earth's conditions that the poles have vast ice-caps now, instead of palms and ferns. Once the great primeval forests resounded to the footfall of the elephant and to the song of many birds. These have now disappeared. God has, indeed, hid the garden in so careful a manner that no one knows its burial place. It passed out of sight and remains but a lovely picture in the dreams of those who once walked amid its fields and groves.

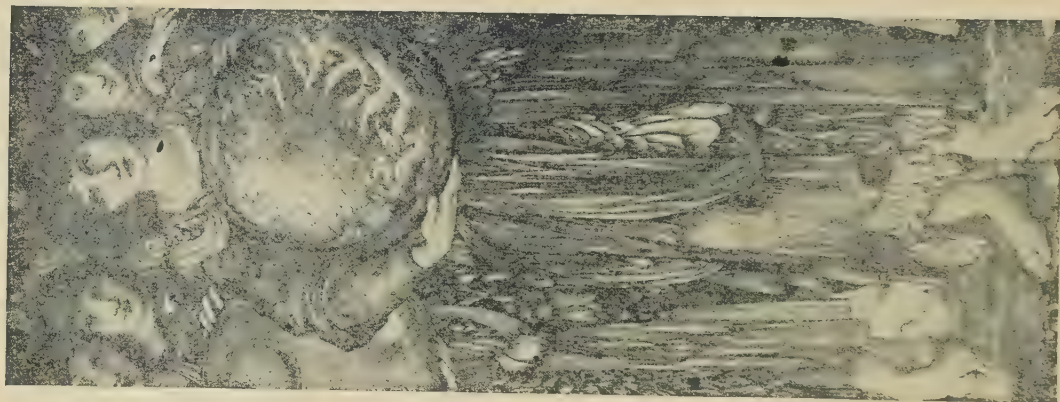
In that garden God "placed the man whom He had formed." "And the Lord God took the man, and put him into the Garden of Eden to dress and keep it." The man's name was Adam. He was educated to think, to plan, and to work.

His mind found exercise in naming the trees, the grasses, the flowers, and the fruit. No doubt he was led to think of the sky, with its clouds and its stars. Besides this, he named the animals; which was no easy task. When we describe a horse, we say it has four legs, a tail, hoofs, ears, nose, eyes, and a coat of hair. But how many other animals have all these? This training was a great education to Adam. It required a command of language. God taught him to speak. In experience he could be compared to a baby, with no idea of distance, grasping equally at the moon or a red ball. Adam as a man was born full formed; to see and know distance; to talk and to walk, or else God became his teacher. Beauty surrounded him, in the varied characteristics of flower, tree, stream, and sky.

As the Creator looked out upon the world with its single inhabitant, He said it was very good. Soon he said, "There is one thing that is not good." "It is not good for man to be alone." Adam had no earthly companion. When God said, after he had created man, the earth was very good, He contemplated going a step further, for He said: "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness, and let them have dominion." The plural "them" shows that God intended to give man company. Therefore, when the man stood there alone, and God said, "Everything is very good," He included in that statement His intention to create woman. Therefore he rightly said, "It is not good for man to be alone." That saying not only served as a rule then, but is the rule



"And God said, Let there be lights to divide the day from the night."



"And God said, Let the waters bring forth abundantly."



"And God said, Let us make man in our image, and let him have dominion over all the earth."



now. We are social beings and develop most in the home and in the society of fellow beings. We draw near at this point to a most interesting and momentous fact in the world's history--the creation of woman.

God caused a deep sleep to fall on the man. Taking a portion of his body He "buildded" a woman. What the woman is, God shows by what He says. She is like the man, she is a help to him; his friend, his wife. God called her a help for man. That is how we obtain the word help-meet. That word constituted them equals. The man received the name of man because of his equality. He is the strong one--the brave, the defender, the nourisher. The woman is the feminine of this; wife by name and woman by nature. This was the first bridal party; God gave the bride, and it must have been a great, glad moment for the groom. We do not know whether God told Adam, before or after his sleep, how the woman had been created. He knew, however, for he said: "This is now bone of my bone, and flesh of my flesh; she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man. Therefore shall a man leave his father and mother and shall cleave unto his wife; and they shall be one flesh." Thus man passes from solitude into society, from unity into the blessedness of home. This union was made so sacred, so godly, that the relation of husband and wife should take precedence of every other affection in the world.

There was no superiority of one over the other. Adam was not at his best when alone; therefore, the woman was given him, to help, to advise, to comfort, to cheer, to be his companion and best friend--more than friend--she was God's gift. But the man was supposed to be just as much to the woman as the woman to the man. We must remember that the deciding quality of life is the woman. She entered life last as a completion, and we shall find that the world depends on her for its moral quality. When she falters, all fail. When she stands, all triumph together.

True love in husband and wife is a life of self-forgetfulness. Every wish is shared by each, and no sorrow is experienced alone. They belong solely to one another. The thought of equality so occupied the minds of this bridal pair that whether the day was one of joy or sorrow they were thankful for the privilege of sharing it together. Human love makes two lives one in every respect. Sex is a quality of

soul, more even than an attribute of the body. Man and woman in their intellectual and spiritual natures have much in common, yet they differ. No envy need excite the heart of either, for they are the complement—the one of the other. The woman is delicate in physical organization; her body is a revelation of her spirit. Because of that spirit, we find her penetrating life with beauty, moral excellence and spiritual refinement; by her sympathy and intuition she is marvelously fitted to mould and to guide.

Home was created at first because of love, and is now created because love is there.

Singularly, there follows a statement that the man and the woman were naked and not ashamed. These clothes of ours, in which we are rightly interested, are after all the sign of a loss. When people give so much thought to them, have so much pride in their make-up, they are like prisoners rejoicing in the badge which marks their fall. There was a day, when man and woman by perfect purity walked in nature's garments unconscious of heat or cold, without shame crossing their minds. These two holy beings, who loved with the love of God, knew neither summer nor winter and had no need to be ashamed of anything.

It is an interesting fact that as every race has a tradition of a Deluge or Flood, so has every race a tradition of a Golden Age where all was peace and purity.

God gave the man and woman to each other; they were as angels, possessing everything in the world except one thing. Since they were spiritual beings they must be educated spiritually. The woman was approached by a tempter. That tempter laid out before her a kingdom. He led her, as it were, to a great height, showing her how very glorious her life could be made. She was induced to think that it would be better, that she and Adam would be greater if they did as the tempter suggested. She tasted of that forbidden fruit and induced her husband to do the same. They tasted of the fruit of the tree of good and evil, which God had forbidden. It was the only thing denied them. Soon as they had done this they were conscious of their sin and nakedness, and covered their bodies with garments made of leaves.

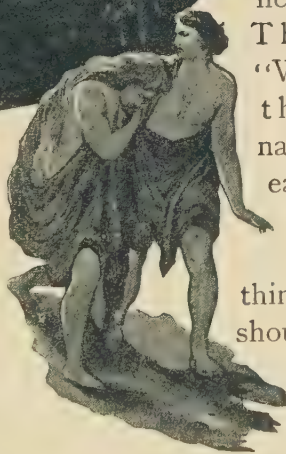
But the saddest thing of all was their fear of God. At evening, after the task of the day had been completed, they who were accustomed to meet their Father were now afraid of him, and began to feel

that peculiar orphanage which wrong-doing creates in human hearts. They suffered that sense which all feel when every stone, field and star cry out the sin which has been committed. They feared the shadow, but they feared the light more, for they hid deep within the shadow of the trees.



ADAM AND EVE DRIVEN OUT OF  
THE GARDEN OF EDEN.

At evening, that beautiful hour when once in joy they met God, they awaited Him in a trembling manner, and when He called, they said: "We were naked and we were ashamed and afraid when we heard thy voice." Then He said: "Who did tell thee that thou wast naked? Hast thou eaten of the forbid-



man began to its wrong-doing thinks Adam meanly shoulders. I do not believe that wife. God had "The woman

den tree?" Thereupon the talk. Wrong is apt to cast on some one else. The world shifted everything to his wife's concede the world's argument. Adam intended to honor his given her to him, and he said: thou gavest to be with me, she gave me of the tree and I did eat." It was a childlike way of stating the manner in which he got into difficulty. He had no wish to implicate his wife or to draw her under the burden of reproof. But he was like one who, intent on making a movement, was too absorbed to see what the move meant. He did



the mischief and drew the wife into trouble. There are unconscious volumes of praise for that wife in his declaration. She had been his adviser. If any blame was attached to this, it was a blame to the giver who presented him with so high a being, in whom all his soul was wrapped. He never had doubted her, he did not doubt her now; he followed her. That was his reason to God. He shielded no one, he blamed no one. He talked like an open, simple-minded child of his loving devotion to Eve. Then God turned to her—not as the offender, but as the majestic one in the transaction. He did not turn to her as the weak one, nor as the wrong-doer merely, but as the moral center of the transaction. She alone was able to trace the movements which had brought them ashamed into the presence of God. The man could not explain this; the woman could. Woman never stood higher than she stands here, and it points to the fact that in every crisis the woman commands the situation. This is said in honor of her position. She it is who elevates or lowers the race.

Eve's frank statement cleared all doubt away. They were guilty of sin. An order was issued for their punishment. They could not remain in the Garden of Eden. That which tempted them received at God's hand the measure of attention worthy the situation. Those who yield to temptation are given their several paths of destiny; Adam had his in the field, Eve found hers in the home. The field fell, man fell, and death came into the world as a result of that temptation and fall.

We cannot tell just how man would have passed into the immortal life had he not sinned. Perhaps his body, ever refining, as the soul refines, would by some divine chemistry have passed into a fine substance, just as the soil water passes up into the Easter Lily. Dying is a penalty born of sin. We fall into the habit of sinning, and we fall into the penalty of dying. When sinning ceases, dying will pass away.

After a time the day came for Adam and Eve to take up their walk together, out of Eden, never more to see its beauties nor enter upon its glories. Punishments are always easier to bear when inflicted in a gentle way. Angels went out with Adam and Eve. Had they been permitted to look back to the gateway of the garden, they would have seen angels guarding the gates. No one could go in after they went out. They were driven out, but they still had a hope of

the eternal city. They reasoned that if the old Eden was beautiful, the new Eden would be unspeakably grand and full of glory. In going out of the old home and into the new, conditions became greatly changed; yet it was home to them, and that meant everything. Adam

found the tilling of the soil to be



THE FIRST FAMILY.

far different from that in Eden. The sweat was brought to his brow by the new and exacting conditions of labor

We perspire excessively only as we exert ourselves. But there was a day when man felled the trees, ploughed the ground, cut the grain, trimmed the vine with

no sign of undue exertion. Now the beads of sweat frequently gather on the face as we work at our daily toil.

Ere long that home had a new occupant. The voice of a babe fell on the air, crying and cooing as it daily waxed stronger. Its coming was a real event in human life, quite as serious and solemn as death.

How much a child's cry teaches us the kinship of the world! I remember not long since of looking upon a Chinese audience as they listened to the singing of a great artist. The stolid mass of men bent forward as one, with faces intent yet unillumined with appreciation. In crossing the stage, a button on the sleeve of my coat became entangled in the hair of a Chinese boy, causing him to cry. From that time the audience appealed to me as it had not done before.

Their sympathies were aroused toward the feelings of this child and I liked them for it.

Childhood brings that long-away home nearer to us—brings it within our view. This, at least, was the case with Eve, as the babe lay against her bosom looking up into the mother's face. Down in her heart she felt that destiny would be kinder and that the old loss would be compensated in him and their Paradise regained. Imagine, if you can, Adam and Eve trying to solve the mystery of love, as they looked for the first time into the eyes of the first babe child of the world!

The father now began to see a new grandeur gathering around his hearth. To Eve, his wife, he gave a new name in sacred commemoration of the first birth. That name was Mother, the most sacred of human words. Mother! What meaning! What love! What mystery! The combined temples of refuge! There is never a tear, a disappointment, a hope, or a shame, that mother does not share. Her lullaby was as our first song, and her prayer was the golden stairway by which we climbed the glorious heights and gazed into heaven.

The first woman was called Eve because she was "the mother of all living." When motherhood came into the home, fatherhood also accompanied, the defense and the law of home. Two angels, father and mother, law and love, walk hand in hand.

Thus are the experiences of time adding strength to our words, while the world far and near will ever sing:

"Hush, my babe, lie still and slumber,  
Holy angels guard thy bed;  
Heavenly blessings without number  
Gently hover o'er thy head."

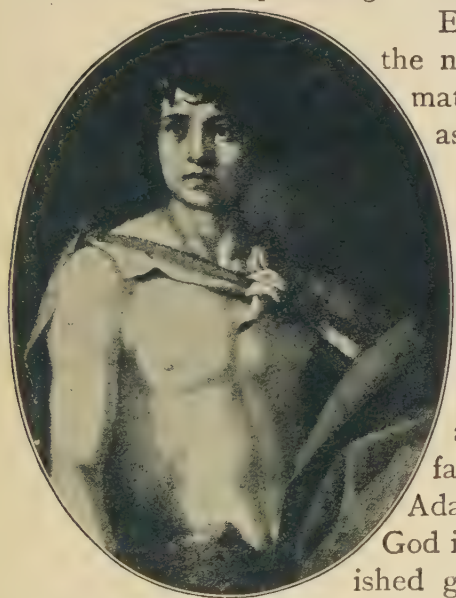
The father bows in holy reverence before mother and child.



## CHAPTER III

### CAIN; OR THE FIRST BOY AND HIS DESCENDANTS

THE first family had a new joy when Cain came into the home. Parents who make a failure of any one feature in life endeavor to train their children by their experience. They see what to choose and what to avoid. Wise parentage is a great fortune to a child.



Eve was hopeful of his future. Hence the naming of her child became an important matter. Even now a name cannot be laid aside easily, and on this account considerable attention should be paid to a name. Names mean much; sometimes through them fortunes are gained and lives made successful.

They often become a power urging the character on to better effort. They go up and down in life, becoming a picture of some one, some thing, some faith, some hope. From the time that Adam and Eve had the conversation with God in the Garden of Eden, Eve had cherished great hopes. These sprang immortal in her breast at the time of her deepest sorrow. She now became busy with plans built on this hope and this conversation with God. A little son became the center of her plans. When he arrived she named him Cain, a name which has many meanings. One is "spear head." Eve felt that he would become a martial figure and destroy the enemy who had caused their downfall. She pictured him a warrior overcoming evil. Another meaning is that of "Possession." They had lost a beautiful home and she thought this boy would win it back. So by fancy and by imagination, by faith and by hope this little child stood before her an ideal man, a warrior achieving great things—a hero regaining the lost Paradise.

No hopes ever gathered more abundantly about even a young king lying in his gold and ivory cradle than those which clustered about this child, and to add to this, Eve was his teacher and impressed these things on him. They became his schooling.

When Alfred the Great, King of England, was only a young boy his mother taught him poems and facts relating to his future kingdom. She taught him to listen to those who traveled from court to court singing the history of the world, and it proved a wise training, for in the dark hours of his nation's peril he alone never gave up hope. We can perhaps truthfully say, he made England a Nation. This illustrates a mother's power in a child's life.

We cannot always tell what a boy will do on a particular occasion, but we can generally tell by the way his life starts out what his character will be when grown to manhood. In growing, boys resemble trees, some of which have a body growing upward almost perpendicular, others have arms, sometimes two, sometimes three, branching out from the body. The set of the tree has the outline of development in its life; what the fruit will be, or the taste and color of it, we do not know, but the general form of the tree we do know. The same is true in regard to a person's life. We can generally tell what character it will assume. Had we known Cain in his boyhood we would have seen leadership manifest itself even then, for he had a great idea, even though it ran wild. He was, no doubt, thoroughly acquainted with his mother's hopes and dreams for himself, and for them. He had a great destiny mapped out, but we must remember one is never really great till he learns to control his own spirit.

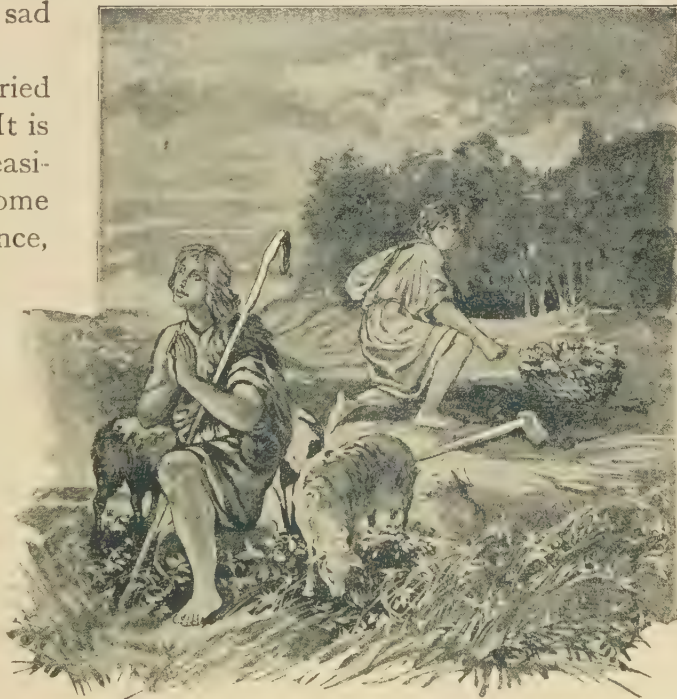
Later on another son was born into the home. This second son they called Abel, which had a double meaning—A Breath and Vanity.

This little fellow had no warrior blood in his veins. If Eve saw Cain go out with a spear, she saw nothing of this in Abel. He, like his infant breath, was frail and delicate. We are led to ask why Eve named him Abel. Can it be that she already saw that the hopes she had entertained of Cain were only vain hopes—hopes without fulfillment; and that she voiced her disappointment in the name she gave her second son? No one can tell. This we know, though, that the combination of the two mean Sorrow. Eve was finding tears as well as joys along the path of life.

The Bible gives no further account of Cain and Abel until they have grown to manhood. Then we find that they selected different occupations—one tilled the soil, the other raised flocks and herds.

Divine worship had been inaugurated in the earth. It was natural that each young man should be taught to bring an offering from his own respective field of occupation. We are told that God accepted Abel's offering, but refused that of Cain's. Let us not think it was the *kind* of offering which was accepted or refused. It was not the *kind* but the *manner* of offering it—the heart was the thing which decided the Lord. This is brought plainly into view by God's conversation with Cain. "And the Lord said unto him, Why art thou wroth and why is thy countenance fallen? If thou doest well, shalt thou not be accepted? and if thou doest not well, sin lieth at thy door." That is the whole substance of the matter. No offering is of value that does not bring with it a noble heart. Abel had that, Cain had not, and more than all, Cain's anger did not pass away. He became more and more wrathful, and meeting his brother in the field one day, slew him. This is the second of earth's sad stories.

Cain quietly buried his brother's body. It is possible that no uneasiness was felt at home because of Abel's absence, for it was customary for shepherds to take their flocks away, for days at a time. God, however, who sees all, approached Cain as though nothing had taken place—thus giving him an opportunity of a soul's refuge—a voluntary confession—and asked him a few di-



CAIN AND ABEL OFFERING SACRIFICE.



rect questions. No human eye witnessed the act, no human ear heard the cry. This was the supreme moment in Cain's life to make atonement. Think you it was possible for him to deny it? Note what he says: "Am I my brother's keeper?" Then God told him He had seen all and that it was impossible to allow such a great sin to pass unpunished, that He was *first* going to exile him from home, and *second*, prevent the ground in which he thought he had hidden his secret from yielding its fruit to him. Upon hearing this Cain replied, "I cannot bear my sin; Thou hast driven me from Thy presence; I am made a homeless wanderer; all who find me will kill me." God, however, was kind and showed him a sign which assured him of the safety of his life. What that sign was we do not know, but it convinced Cain that he would not suffer death by the hand of man.

No word has ever come from out the distant past to tell us how deeply Adam and Eve's home was affected when this double shadow fell upon it. Could human hope ever have received a greater shock? The mother's dream to recover the old home ended with the death of one son and the exile of the other. In case they ever met Cain again it would be impossible to speak of their shattered hopes. So by force of circumstance and by decree of God, it seemed best that they be separated.

There was a land eastward from Eden's holy ground, a place called Nod, and here Cain went and dwelled. He built a place of abode. While building it a son was born into his family. What a pity that this babe could not have come sooner! It might have taught Cain gentleness and made it impossible for him to strike a blow against another. Cain named the child Enoch, which shows what he was thinking about later in life. The name had a volume of meaning—initiation and dedication. Cain built a wall around his city, thus making it a fortification. This was initiation into a new set of ideas. The building and planning necessitated a knowledge of sciences, the producing of which has made civilization famous. This fact shows us that his life was dedicated to progress and invention. Cain called both his son and his city Enoch. Both were named and dedicated to the arts and the sciences.

Far down in the history of Cain's family was a descendant named Lamech. In him the strength of the material civilization begun by Cain reached its height. Lamech depended not on God for success,

but on the imperial mind and strength of his race, which seemed to have gathered beauty and splendor as time went on. In the pride of all this, he sang a song of love, which is also a song of war. As it is the first recorded poem, it may be of interest to our readers:

“ Adah and Zillah hear my voice,  
Wives of Lamech hearken to my speech;  
For a man have I slain for my wound,  
And a youth for my hurt.  
If sevenfold avenged be Cain,  
Then Lamech seventy and seven.”

As near as we can get the meaning of this poem, Lamech says he *had* or *would* slay a man for a wound. That is to say, he was not



AN ARAB ENCAMPMENT.

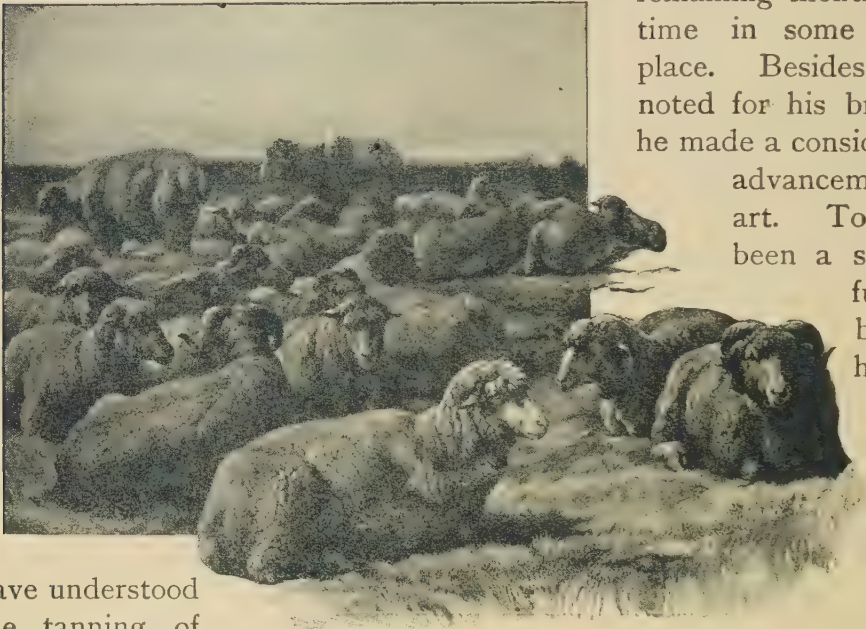
satisfied to pay in proportion to the injury done him, but his idea was death for wound, or even death for a hurt. He appealed to

God's care of Cain, and said, if Cain was protected or avenged sevenfold, he was able to protect himself ten times more than Cain was protected by God. If he thought of God at all, he imagined that his wars and vengeance were due to God's great help. Whatever else may be the meaning of the poem, it shows conclusively that the work of that civilization was wholly divorced from religion. The result of this showed itself later in the corruption of society.

Here we find the first instance of a man having more wives than one. God's beautiful ordinance of marriage was here set aside, and in

its place was introduced a factor which has always brought sorrow, intrigue and discord. But notwithstanding their faults, from Cain's family great men have sprung. The sons of Lamech—Jabal, Jubal and Tubal Cain—have become famous in the earth's history.

Jabal, the eldest son, is known as "the originator of the tent." He was considered an unusually brave man. He often took his herds and flocks, and with them ventured far from his fortress home, frequently



remaining months at a time in some lonely place. Besides being noted for his bravery, he made a considerable advancement in art. To have been a successful tent-builder he must

have understood the tanning of skins, which were

"FAR FROM THE FORTRESS HOME."

used to cover the tents, and understood also carpenter work in order to have cut the poles and pegs. With Jabal a race like the Arab sprang up, moving wherever circumstances led the way. They recognized no ruler or no government except themselves.

Jubal, the second son, is known as "the father of the harp and the pipe." Musical instruments may seem widely separated from field life, yet that does not follow. The man who dwelt in the field had the opportunity of hearing the music of the world. The wind in the pipes, around the reeds and over the grasses, made music finer than any artificial instrument could possibly have done, let the player be ever so inspired. Is it any wonder that Jubal, as he stood by the swamp's edge

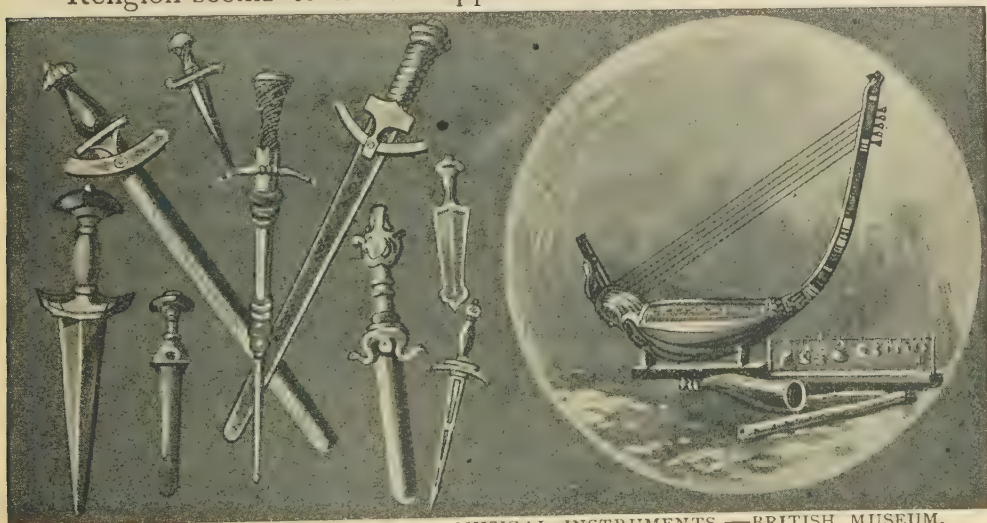


where the hollow reed piped its song in the open sky, cut the stalk and through it blew his breath in a manner similar to the wind? This is how he obtained the first reed instrument. In the same natural way, the twang of the bow, as the arrow sped on its way, gave him an idea of the harp. Jubal was an observant, poetical and practical man—observant, because he noticed sounds and how they were produced; poetical, because he converted nature into song; practical, because he possessed sufficient skill to build the frame of the harp and string it properly.

Lamech's third son, Tubal Cain, was a maker of warlike instruments. As the making of these required some knowledge of chemistry, it is evident that Lamech's descendants had reached an age in history where great progress in civilization began to show itself. Here were three brothers—all poets as well as mechanics; all practical men as well as poetic.

Strange as it may seem, there is mentioned among this list of early great people only one woman's name—that of Naamah. She, no doubt, was a beautiful woman, yet there must have been more in her life than beauty, else a mention even of her name would hardly seem justified. Still, were this their reason, only, it would perhaps show some signs of advancement in the fact that they were beginning to recognize beauty. This advance, however, was from a material standpoint only.

Religion seems to have dropped out of the life of Cain's descend-



EARLY IMPLEMENTS OF WAR AND MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS.—BRITISH MUSEUM.

ants much as light fades out of the evening sky, for while their achievements and wealth made them a power upon the earth for a time, they gradually degenerated, losing even their hope of heaven as time advanced.

Those who appreciate beauty and accomplishment, who love books and buildings, must rejoice with great gladness for all earthly attainments. But without religion, civilization tends to decay. Eventually Cain's descendants became corrupt, and God saw it was best to destroy the race. This did not happen because it was beautiful, but in spite of its beauty. God gradually faded out of their thoughts and they became as the grass and flowers which, having no rain or sun to give them life, perish.

The character of Cain, their ancestor, was not such as to give life to the world, but rather death—for he had a selfish spirit. At first it was not particularly noticeable, but gradually his thoughts set their mark on the rest of the world, and all fell together.

The heroes passed away, God was forgotten, and the climax of it all is recorded in the story of Noah. We now leave this period of the world. A great change is about to take place, due to the principles started by Cain. We should be glad if the first boy could have been talked of in a better way, but history is written to warn and to instruct, and above all to give us facts.

## CHAPTER IV

### SETH ; OR THE TAKING OF ANOTHER BOY'S PLACE

NO person can take another's place in life, any more than one leaf on a tree can take the place of another leaf. One may take up the work that another had laid down, but no one can live another's life—each life must be lived by the soul to whom it is given.



MOTHER AND CHILD.

Abel was dead. No one could take his place. The old home was empty—one son was in heaven; the other had disappeared. Abel had been loved by God from the very beginning. As he grew to manhood and became a keeper of flocks, the habit of meditation and piety grew upon him.

Whenever any person is away from the hurry of life, where all is quiet, that quite naturally comes into the heart. Here is where great work is accomplished. Great thinking is never done in a rush. When men write great songs, great poems or great books, or when painters compose great works, they withdraw to a place where noise cannot crowd in upon their thoughts. We are told that George Washington, when first informed of his election as President of the United States, retired to a quiet place—a place where he could be alone with God. He felt the necessity of meditation and prayer before taking up the duties and responsibilities of a great nation. Taking one's cares to God is the natural refuge of every man. Abel learned this early in life. This calm way of doing things appealed to his nature, and he found after a time that he could see through questions more clearly and understand life better when he lived in the open field where all was quiet.



To illustrate this let us take the air. When it is full of dust and smoke, the sight is limited; when full of light, objects can be clearly distinguished at a distance. A quiet hour is like the sky on a clear day. It enables one to see distinctly what the sight fails to see when the air is full of smoke and dust. Hence, when we wish to see some special object we choose those days and conditions which give the best opportunity for seeing. Living that life which gives us power to see godlike things and see them clearly, is living a life like Abel's. Knowing that quiet brought this inner light, he sought more and more the quiet hours. With this knowledge, his dependence on God grew, until he realized that the source of all life was God, and realizing it so thoroughly, was able to walk and talk with God. Need we wonder, then, that as he came into association with Cain he became more and more a contrast to him?

You have doubtless heard people say of certain children: "They are born for heaven." Is not the same true of any person who lives a devoted life? Perhaps he has graduated from college, is gifted, and well fitted to enjoy life. Even so, when God calls him we ought to say he was only loaned to the earth for a while.

We must not think that anything is lost, but rather consider that everything is gained by such people having lived. Things unfold themselves in one's life that could have developed in no other way. God gives the gift to awaken the souls interested, leases it for a season, then places it where we will desire to follow.

Abel's life had gradually changed the hearts of Adam and Eve, causing them to think of holier things than that which Cain had led them to consider. During the latter's life they were planning to regain power and to build a fortune. During Abel's life they thought of God, of the altar, and of heaven. The two sons did not impress Adam and Eve as being so unlike until Abel had passed away, then they realized how he had filled their hearts. They still were in possession of his great fields and the beautiful things of nature, but they missed *him* and his spiritual life.

This was the way matters stood at the home of Adam and Eve when a third son was born. They had faith to believe he would be to them all Abel had been, and more, so they called him Seth, which means "Appointed." We follow Seth and his descendants through life with

profound interest, and rejoice to know that from them came the great, noble and good men who loved God and kept religion alive in society.

Cain's descendants, as we have seen, became famous in art and invention. It would have been fortunate could art and religion have blended instead of becoming separated. Had life in 'the field and life in the shop been lived equally with God, they would have become a power for good in the world.

Murillo, the great Spanish painter, did a work of a lifetime when he painted the picture entitled "The Convent Kitchen," which to-day hangs in the Louvre at Paris. In this picture angels are represented as servants busy at work in a convent kitchen. One is putting a kettle over the fire, another is lifting a bucket of water; both are doing their duty with rare grace, while a third is reaching up for plates at the kitchen cupboard. There is also a child angel running about—a happy, wee tot—whom the larger angels love. The artist has caught heaven's idea—the work of men and women, of boys and girls, should be done as though we were angels. To succeed in life, the strength of Cain should be united with the godliness of Seth. Later on in the book we shall see that wrong came and that battles were fought because these ideas became separated.

The name of Seth not only means "Appointed," but "Compensation" as well. He was not only appointed to do another's work, but became Adam's and Eve's compensation for the loss of Abel. They loved him not only for the sake of his brother and strove to make his character noble like that of Abel; but loved him also for his own individuality. In this way a double love was given—a love which placed him on an ideal basis, and one which placed him on a real basis.

Tradition tells us that the descendants of Seth were the great astronomers of early times; that the contemplation of God brought them to study the higher sciences of life. We are told, too, that it was predicted to them that the earth would ere long be destroyed. Men who obtain great facts by hard labor and years of study dislike to see knowledge destroyed. Thus it was with the descendants of Seth; they began early to think of a way to transmit knowledge to their successors.

Wealthy men are to-day often criticised because they buy up and preserve in museums valuable relics of the world. The world may call them "foolish," but God may call them great.

So the more the Sethites thought about the world's destruction, the more they questioned the best way of preserving the knowledge of the stars and the planets. Tradition says that they invented writing, but that their books were not paper, neither were they cylinders of clay. Instead, they were pillars—one of brick and one of marble. Upon these they inscribed all that they had learned, at the same time beseeching God that the knowledge might not be lost. This great and pathetic plan became the great university of the world. I am inclined to think it was built on some favorite spot grown sacred to them by years of study and association with that place.

These pillars of learning, like a university, needed teachers to explain the writing. Some few, perhaps a number, sacrificed wealth, ambition and power, in order to bring the knowledge amassed down through the ages of time. In the starting of any great work some lives must be given up for the good of others. In America, we as a people are rich, yet our colleges have had two centuries of poverty. Poverty, however, does not stop great study, nor great thinking; on the contrary, it calls one to greater endeavor, even to the sacrifice of necessary food and clothing. It is often a fact, that when God wishes for a man to accomplish a really great work He withholds riches from him. Poverty calls out all that is in him. He then does not rely on anything except true power—that which is innate—illumined and directed of God. Many poor men become rich by the spur of poverty, and many rich men become poor because they know not the value of work or fortune. So while this far-away university was not rich, it gathered choice spirits and taught them the real knowledge of the world.

What a goodly company of noble men were they, who, long, long years ago, kept knowledge alive in the earth! We naturally ask, who was the first professor? I am inclined to think it was Seth, because tradition says it was revealed to Adam that the world was to be destroyed. If tradition is correct, I am sure it was like Seth to think out a plan of saving the world and founding a university. He was a royal man, advocating all that was strong and helpful in the world. The whole secret of it was—he *knew* God.

Let us never think that because we are chosen second we may not help make the best currents in the world. "The last shall be first" is an old story.



## CHAPTER V

### ENOCK; OR AN INTERRUPTED CURRENT

WHEN we examine an electric battery we discover it is not only an interesting instrument, but a powerful one. The two wires, ending in two handles of metal, give a positive and a negative current. Usually the current flows smoothly and without interruption. It can be made otherwise, however. When a physician who has charge of a battery turns on what we call an interrupted or Faradic current, he does it to give a shock—a shock which the system feels far more than it does when the ordinary current is applied.

We get the same fact in another way. When a man with his hand at our back pushes steadily it does not seem to affect us to any great extent, even though the pressure is very



ENOCK WALKED WITH GOD.

great, for the reason that there is no shock, but if, on the other hand, he strikes a blow measuring only ten pounds, we are often jarred throughout the system. The interrupted electric current is like a series of blows which the physician uses when he wishes to arouse the nervous system.

The life of man is like a ceaseless flowing current running smoothly from day to day. Great truths do not affect him unless God interrupts the current. This He sometimes does when He finds we are in a dangerous condition. The shock causes us to grow as a result into a healthier frame of mind.

History was moving along uneventfully until the time of Enoch, a descendant of Seth. He was an interruption to the routine course of events. He not only aroused the world, but gave the world food for thought.

The Enoch we are considering is the seventh man born into the world. He is designated by the title "the seventh from Adam," because there was another Enoch. We speak of this Enoch just as we would if we wished to distinguish two kings of the same name. He was the father of Methuselah, the man who lived longer than any other person in the world. Enoch, however, lived only a short time compared to many men of his day. His years numbered three hundred and sixty-five.

His peculiar characteristic is that he "walked with God." This denotes a close communion and fellowship with the Father—and reminds one of the days Adam and Eve spent with God in the Garden of Eden. Because of this fellowship, Enoch became a wise man. He had the true knowledge, which was vastly different from that spreading over the world. When he saw the tendency of his age, he preached against it. God gave him insight into the future. This made him a prophet. Prophet is an official term, meaning one who speaks for God.

Knowing the future and realizing the evil that was growing in the world, Enoch advised the people to mend their ways and to avoid the impending doom. He became the prophet of repentance and of judgment. He was not only a religious teacher, but a professor of science in the old university, established by Seth. He was interested in literature, in astronomy, and the various arts. He was a transmitter of true knowledge, a divine scholar, a holy man. His reputation pleased God. At least men who talked about him said this.

You will recall that Enoch means "Initiation." God initiated him into all truth.

While he was a great, good and learned man, this does not constitute the entire ground on which the world is interested in him. The brief sentence which interests the world most is as follows: "And Enoch walked with God: and he was not: for God took him." The author of the early records understood what the statement meant when he wrote the words, and we can understand them to-day. They mean that he did not die, but was taken to heaven in a strange and wonderful way.

His body did not see death, but was changed into a spiritual form so refined that it could live in heaven. There is no flesh and blood there—all is spirit and life.

No doubt men searched for Enoch. Human nature is very much the same the world over, and they doubtless instituted search parties from



"ENOCH ADVISED THE PEOPLE TO MEND THEIR WAYS."



among the college students. They knew he ascended, but they thought possibly the going away was only temporary, and that, after visions had been shown him, he would return to the earth again.

This beautiful thought is fully recorded in the book of Genesis. Every one should read it. Moses, the author, was inspired of God.

The great prose writers and poets ought always to be studied. The opinions of a people gathering about an author show that they considered him fitted to present a national idea. They believed Moses was setting forth conditions as they existed.

By studying authors we get the thought and experiences of the age in which they live. This is one of the ways in which the past is revealed to us. The little sentence relating to Enoch's translation and revealed by an inspired writer, shows us the thought of men long ago. It is like the print of a human foot in the sand of time.

The author of the book of Hebrews has a long list of heroes—all men of faith. We run our finger down—yes, Enoch is on the list. You read of him, "the seventh from Adam." What else does this writer say? He says: "He had this testimony, that he pleased God." A general, when on the field of battle, often notes and makes report of certain soldiers whose bravery commands attention. Enoch's reputation and fame were gained under the eye of God.

The historian also says, by faith Enoch was translated so that he should not see death. This is what two great writers say of him.

This event could happen only to one like Enoch, and it could occur only for one simple reason: he walked with God. Adam and Eve were driven out of Eden because they failed to do this. We cease to die when we cease to sin, but do God's will. This seems too wonderful to believe to mortal minds, yet it is true, and the single verse here recorded has value because of its truth. God wrote it in this manner to attract men's attention. It is like a brilliant flower in the midst of grass. Grass is the common and good gift of God, but a flower is a special gift because of its color, form, and perfume. This event in Enoch's life shows us by example God's way of keeping men and women from sinking below the level. Ordinary life must be stirred; the manner of going to heaven must sometimes be changed, lest heaven fade out of life. Men and women grow rusty by the regular sameness of things; the taking

of a life into glory by a way not ordinary enriches hope and makes life sweeter to mankind. This is not necessary in God's heart, for He *knows*, but it is necessary to man because *his* heart is changeable.

Men and women with faith and hope are powerful instruments for good. That it has not always been realized has in no way injured the fact. That which is to remain great is a thing so very great that it always remains new—too large to be taken as a whole. The land where breezes heal the sick, where shade blesses the weary, whose roads are filled with all things necessary to a great existence, should not have one follower but many. It is not an accident with God that Methuselah, the man who lived the longest in the history of the world, was a son of Enoch; neither is it an accident that the man who never died was the father of Methuselah.

Enoch walked with God; so did his son. God wanted to impress on the minds of men this fact, which he did by taking one to glory in an instant, and keeping the other for nearly a thousand years.

The current of life was interrupted in both instances to fix this fact, that the man who walks with God has much to expect and nothing to lose. Let us remember, then, that the history of Enoch is God's way of fixing men's minds on great things. That verse is God's finger-mark, which all the world has stopped to read. It has eased the mind, given it hope, shown the world that the soul of man was greater than its mere three-score-and-ten years. Walking with God solves every problem of life. Nothing shall conquer that. Enoch is the proof to all ages past and all ages yet to come that *this is so*. It is an enriching thing to have an enriching thought in one's life.

When a child is born into a home and remains a little while, then taken away, he is missed by every member of the family. The family can never think of heaven without thinking of him; and they never think of him without thinking of heaven. Thus is the life of that family made sweeter by the arrival and departure of the little one. He may never have spoken a word, but he is a great hope and a great call to them.

Enoch's life was a similar power in the world. After he departed, heaven seemed to come nearer.

Even those who have not lost loved ones, feel that heaven is better and nearer because Enoch was lifted up to God without dying. How singularly beautiful his name—Initiation—yes, initiated into the divine!

It is the poets and the peasants of the world that come very near to nature's heart. They can see what others do not see, and feel what others do not feel. They do so because they come in close contact with God's work and are thus initiated into His plans. I feel very sure that the Shepherds of Bethlehem had been thinking a good deal about heaven, or the angels would not have told them of Jesus.

If you will read the lives of men who have lived near to nature, you will find that they looked for a day when men shall not die; when they shall go away just as Enoch did.

This idea is not to be considered a pleasing dream, but a great fact which has been told to the poets and peasants by God himself.

It was not in the plan of God that men and women should die and be buried as they are now. It was intended that they should be good and, no doubt, live forever, or gradually change till they became angels. If that plan had not been interrupted, departures like Enoch's would have been the most natural of events. Then the friends would say of those who had gone to heaven: "That is the grandest thing in the world." We would be able to see each one go away as we see beautiful ships float out into the sea. The poets are right; the peasants are right. Their dreams are God's thoughts. Therefore let them dream, and let us listen to their story, for they tell us of a world whose every inhabitant is to be initiated into the divine.



## CHAPTER VI

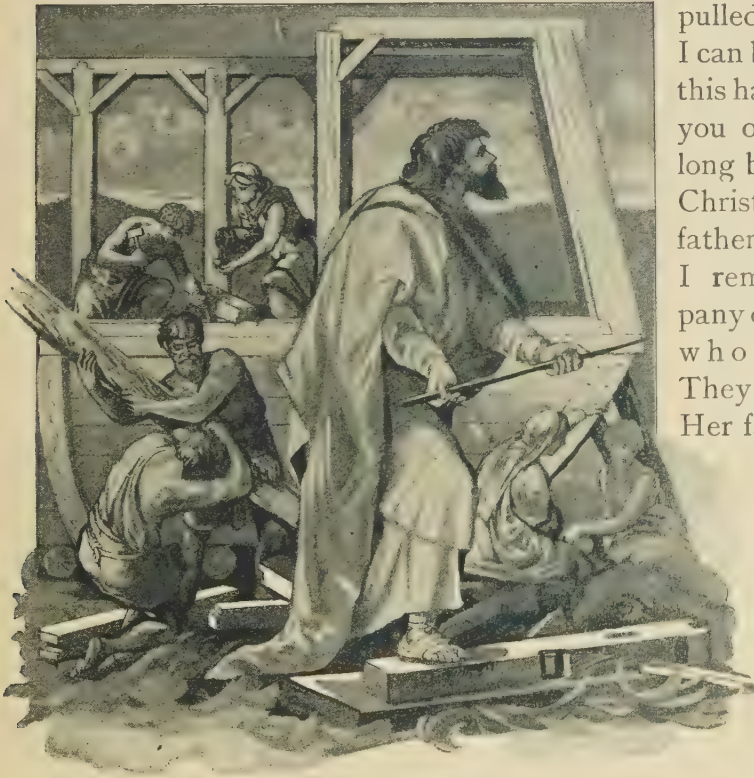
### NOAH; OR HOW HISTORY WAS TRANSMITTED

WE have spoken, dear friends, of the first poem. A poem of love written by Lamech to Adah and Zillah. We are now going to speak of another Lamech, one quite different from the first. One who did not think about war, of wounding and killing men, but of making them better.

There were a great many people on the earth at this time and they were all very bad except one man. The good and the bad had mingled until both were pulled down together.

I can best illustrate how this happened by telling you of a young woman long before the days of Christ. She said to her father, "Why can not I remain in the company of those people, of whom you speak? They are charming."

Her father took a piece of charred wood in a pair of tongs and said to the young woman, arrayed in a white robe beautiful to look upon, "Take this, my child." She hesitated a



BUILDING THE ARK.



THE DFLUGE.

moment, whereupon he said, "It will not burn you, take it." She then took it, but before she was aware, it had blackened her hands and gown. Casting it on the hearth she said, "One cannot be too careful when they handle charred timber." "That is true, my daughter, nor can we be too careful about the company we keep."

The world at this time had grown wicked, but there was one man who did not sink into evil, and that was Lamech. He had a son whom he called Noah. When naming him he said, "This name shall comfort us concerning our work and toil of our hands, because of the ground which the Lord hath cursed." This quotation from the Bible will bear careful consideration, for we are at a point where God was about to make another change in the world. Lamech felt that his son would be the one to change the condition, for he goes on to talk about the ground which had been touched by the fall of man.

Some people do not believe that sin affects the ground, but I say, dear friends, that sin affects not only the ground, but the air, the body of man, and his soul. When we can establish this as a fact in people's minds then we shall have "a new earth, wherein dwelleth righteousness." Science is telling us this now; the scripture settled it long ago. Real science is the discovery of the laws of nature. There can be no strife between "kinds" of knowledge. All facts in spirit and matter belong to God. His ideas are clear; *we* are confused. So Noah, which means comfort, was continually in the father's mind. I am sorry that we do not know more about this father. He deserves to be remembered as a wise power in society at a critical time. He brought up his son to be "a preacher of righteousness." He alone of all the world kept faith alive.

Lamech died and went to heaven, but before going he plainly saw the work that Noah would be called upon to do. He knew that God had talked with him and that Noah had done his best to reform the men and women who were living at this time.

Some take the account of the flood literally; others treat it as a symbol. For example, when it is said, "The end of all flesh is come before me," God meant that the time for those men and women who thought only of a "worldly life," had reached its limit; and that the dawn of the spirit of God had arrived. Noah and his family represented the true life, the remainder of the world represented the false.



Eight persons were the center of the new movement. They were Shem, Ham, and Japheth, all of whom were married. These with Noah and his wife made eight people all told in the ark.

The scheme of salvation included the animals, the birds and the earth. We must remember that there can be no uplifting of man without improving the soil, the air, the birds, and the animals. To illustrate this, let us notice the change for the better in the life of the wolf. You are all familiar with its characteristics, are you not? It is especially fond of sheep, sometimes hunting and killing a score in a single night. Man through affection and by degrees has trained this murderous wolf, until to-day it is known as our honest and brave Collie dog, willing to give its life for the sheep.

After Noah had been in the ark a certain time, he sent out a raven. It did not return. He then sent out a dove. When at last the dove came back with the olive leaf, a token of peace, Noah knew the time of a new beginning was at hand; the dove could dwell in the earth. It was God's sign that the better days for man had come.

A notable sign of the year was presented in these words: "And Noah builded an altar unto the Lord." This is the first account we have of an altar. If we were taking possession of a certain land we would raise a flag. Noah raised the ensign of God. It was an altar. Sailors, who are sometimes wrecked on the shores of a strange island, fear for their lives; but after climbing the hills, as they frequently do, and discovering a church spire, they know then that all is well. They have been cast among God's people.

Notice the singularly beautiful words about the altar: "And the Lord smelled a savor of rest." You have on a warm day smelled from a distance the odor of rain. You found it refreshing and good; the air growing cooler and rest coming later on. It might be said you smelled the savor of rest.

God gave Noah a promise and a sign. With the promise please notice the language: "While the earth remaineth, seed time and harvest, cold and heat, and summer and winter, and day and night, shall not cease." That was the promise. The sign was the rainbow.

God did not create the bow at this time. He created it in the first rain-drop, but now caused its reflection to appear in the heavens. This was very appropriate, because it appeared in the sunshine after a storm.

The rain-drop forms a great prism, enabling man to see that an ordinary white light becomes a combination of all colors in the rainbow. Now if you let a ray of sunlight,



MOUNT ARARAT.

fall through a small aperture on a glass see the sunbeam separate itself into the beautiful colors which you have perceived in the sky. So God not only gave a promise, but taught us how very beautiful nature is at all times. God in making this promise did it much in the same way as we transfer property to a person. We make out a deed and put a seal on the deed. God's promise became his deed; the bow is his mighty seal. See what he says about it: "And it shall come to pass when I bring a cloud over the earth that the bow shall be seen in the cloud, and this is to be the token of a covenant which I have established between me and all flesh that is upon the earth." That "bow" is worthy of the great transaction which it keeps in memory.

Let us remember that whenever trouble comes God will furnish an ARK for the good, enabling them to dwell in safety. His promise has been confirmed by the rainbow in the sky, which has passed down through all the ages in such a way as to enable every one to understand it. The savage, even though he may not be able to read and may never have heard the story as recorded in our Bible, yet feels more comfortable when he sees the bow in the sky. Our purpose in saying that *may be* the savage has never seen the promise recorded, brings out

which is white, prism, you will beautiful colors

the fact that not only do great nations have an account of the flood, but even the savages, who have no books, have a *tradition* of a flood, just as they have a tradition of the entrance of sin into the world. These things indicate a common origin and a common destiny for mankind.

People and language may be likened to a tree, the trunk of which represents the body, out of which everything grows—limbs, branches, twigs, and leaves. Yet, together they form one tree. Language and people originally came out of one stock, but have grown to be as many people and languages as the several branches that have grown from a tree.

What a singular feeling Noah and his people must have had as they started life alone in the valleys of Armenia and Persia and the mountains adjoining! No more lovely spot could have been selected. All varieties of flowers grew in abundance. From time immemorial the people there have extracted perfume from the flowers. From this country also have come the famous rugs. Here, when we plan to weave or paint the best that nature produces we must have a pattern to copy, but the people residing there study nature, and the result is their goods are in demand the world over.

Have you ever noticed that a people's future follows the incidents of their material life? A Persian friend once asked me to visit Oroomiah, in northern Persia. He spoke of the lake and the flowers, then of the Presbyterian college, and said: "Persia is *the* place in which to study—it is the place which God selected for a new and better beginning for His people. Heavenly things impress you there and are in themselves an education." Knowing, as we do, that surroundings affect us, we may be sure that God would be especially mindful of the place where he was to start the race again.

Noah was a faithful servant of God. The single fall which we must record of him was caused by the vine. Unfortunately, he abused the gift and became a drunkard. Ham, Noah's second son, made sport of him, but Shem and Japheth, with the honor and affection of true sons, made an attempt to cover their father's shame. They did right. It makes no difference how low a parent falls, children should never join in sport over his downfall. The world will do enough talking; children should, as much as possible, shield and not reveal the shame.

The only commandment having a promise attached is that relating to the father and mother: "Honor thy father and mother, that thy days



may be long in the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee." God has put that promise in writing, and on the back of the note has endorsed his name. Those who consider the security good will do well to draw the face value of the note. Just as I write this I am reminded of a farmer acquaintance who, although no better a tiller of the soil than his neighbors, has come, by degrees, to own windmills, barns, cattle, horses, sheep, wagons, and carriages. His home, too, is furnished with rugs, hardwood floors, paintings, comfortable chairs, and splendid books. One day I asked him the reason for his unusual success. Imagine my surprise when he said: "Well, my friend, I am not a religious man, in the accepted sense, but I believe my success is largely due to my love and devotion to my parents. I believe in God and his commandments."

So I say it is not only to be regretted, but deplored, that Noah in his old age could not lean upon the strong arm of all his sons. Ham's punishment for his treatment of his father did not end with the father's death—it held a prophecy for the future. The lack of a moral disposition in a parent always produces a baneful effect on the children. Streams take the color of the sky, and the purity of water depends largely upon the material through which they flow. The tendency of the line of Ham did, as we shall see, trend in the direction of coarseness rather than refinement.



NOAH'S SACRIFICE.

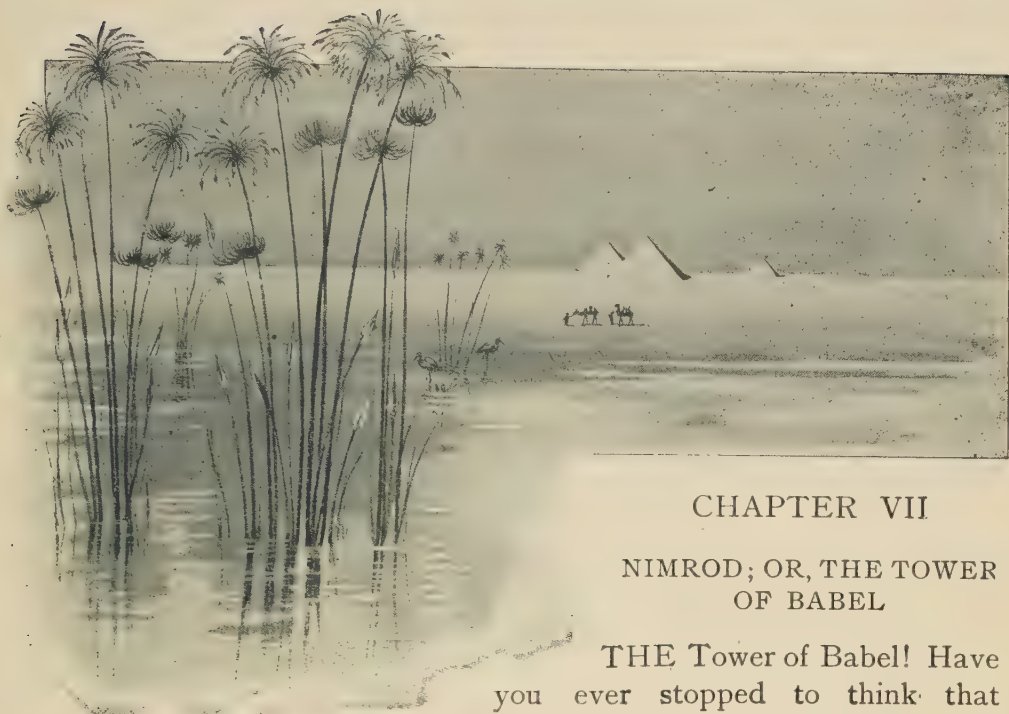
These two incidents, that of the successful farmer and the unfortunate son Ham, show, that it makes little difference how rich or poor the gifts, they do not in themselves make us rich; on the contrary, they sometimes make us poor. The Indians and the early white men in the middle states walked unmindful over the great fields of coal, iron and petroleum, not knowing that the natural gas which they looked upon as a wonder was earth's invitation to dig deeper, saying: "I will light your cities and warm your houses; use me." In many instances these rich gifts make men drunk with speculation and cause their wealth to become a snare. Others do well for themselves and the world, through right doing, as we see by the mills, factories, binderies, foundries, tanks and myriads of other improvements that are springing up here and there. The blessing and the curse are among the gifts. It is the man who *must decide* whether it be good or evil.

A portion of the world fell with Ham, but the greater part stood fast in the conduct of Shem and Japheth, whose descendants possess the earth to-day.

After a long conversation with God, Noah departed this life. The length of his days all told was 950 years. There in that quiet loneliness, a revelation was made to Noah regarding the laws regulating the future conduct of men and women in the world. The earth was given him as it was given Adam and Eve. He was admonished to bring to the mind of men the sacredness of life: His word was ever law to the people.

Ancient historians, speaking of man's life in olden times, say men lived long because they ate proper food and practiced holiness. There is also another reason. An astronomical cycle is completed every 600 years. To carry knowledge of the stars and other things properly, it was necessary that men should live over 600 years. There were no books—instead, men were the books and carried history down to a time when other historians could intelligently take it up and carry it on. Those who lived long did so by particular ordering of God. They were not permitted to die until they had delivered their knowledge to some other person who in turn became the living book of the world's history.

Noah lived 350 years after the flood, and you may rest assured that God had in the meantime fitted some one else to take up the work where he left off.



PAPYRUS PLANT.

## CHAPTER VII

### NIMROD; OR, THE TOWER OF BABEL

THE Tower of Babel! Have you ever stopped to think that this is the place where men's plans were changed? In order to get the right idea of it we must go back into history and trace events, very much as we trace the source of a river, from the mouth to the spring in the hills where it rises.

First, you will recollect that Noah had three sons—Shem, Ham, and Japheth—all of whom went with him into the ark and came out with him after the flood. Noah once made the following prophecy about them. He said that God would bless Shem, enlarge Japheth (which meant that he would make him great), and that Ham would be a servant to both.

In the course of time the descendants of the three brothers became the three great races of the earth, and were known as the Semitic, Hamitic, and Japhetic tribes. In a general way we may define geographically the portions of the earth they inherited as their numbers increased. Shem dwelt in the central zone, Ham in the south, and Japheth in the north. As is usual in such cases, we find that they occasionally overlapped and sometimes reversed positions, but, on the whole, the divisions mentioned give quite accurately their location.



Now, in looking at the different individualities of the three tribes, we find that Shem and his descendants, who occupied the central territory, were of a religious nature. Japheth, the father of the northern tribe, did the work of the world, supported religion and extended his possessions. Ham and his descendants became the servants and slaves of the world. Now, we must not think from this that the descendants of Ham have been slaves and slaves only—that would be a mistaken idea. A few of the world's most wonderful men and women have sprung from the Hamitic race. They, undoubtedly more than any other people, gave us the art of writing. For then, as to-day, accomplishments came as a result of circumstances, and as one branch of the Hamitic race settled in Egypt, where the soil was rich, they in time became wealthy. Wealth always brings leisure, and when nations have leisure they naturally turn their attention to other things besides mere work. Thus the Hamitic race began early to refine itself not only by a study of the arts and sciences but by invention. As an example of their ingenuity in this direction, when the Hamites discovered the papyrus plant in the River Nile they discovered also a way of converting it into paper. From another plant they invented pens. As time passed, their work along these lines became so noted that men and women from other countries went to Alexandria, their chief city—not only to avail themselves of materials for writing, but to have access to the great library which had been founded near by. For a time these people prospered wonderfully well, but later on trouble came.

You have read, have you not, of the great city of Carthage, which was located near Alexandria, in the north of Africa? The French are now occupying it, and the name has been changed to Bizerta. Its harbor is, and always has been, one of the finest in the world. The French government is now making it impregnable with modern forts and heavy guns. The harbor of Bizerta is deemed by some to be sufficiently well located to command the entire Mediterranean Sea. England has spent enormous sums of money to keep her way free through the Mediterranean, thence by the Suez Canal and the Red Sea to India. If France and Great Britain were to go to war, the nation possessing Bizerta, or old Carthage, could sail out and attack all ships going eastward or westward. In early times, Carthage did not hesitate to attack the Roman fleets on their way to the East, so naturally Rome

grew to feel that her national existence depended on the destruction of this enemy—the city of Carthage.

Hamilcar, a loyal Carthaginian, saw with a prophetic eye that some day Rome and Carthage would battle for supremacy; so, fearing death might overtake him before that day came, he asked Hannibal, his son, to kneel, when the latter was but a young boy, and take an oath of enmity against Rome. This, Hannibal did.

Hamilcar was a brilliant soldier, but Hannibal is perhaps the



RUINS OF CARTHAGE.

greatest martial figure the world has seen. He projected the wonderfully bold and brilliant idea of climbing the Alps, then descending into the Italian valleys, and thus besieging Rome. In undertaking this, Hannibal depended upon two contingencies for success; the first, that the nations which Rome had subjugated would rise and greet him as a deliverer; the second, that he could rely upon his countrymen to support him. Both were failures. In the meantime his foes adopted that rule which centuries later destroyed Napoleon: "Attack Napoleon where Napoleon is not." That is, attack that part of Napoleon's army which is in command of some of Napoleon's generals. Napoleon mournfully said: "I cannot be everywhere." Hannibal could not be everywhere.

During his absence from Carthage the Romans delivered a counter-stroke. They invaded Africa, marched against Carthage and took the city.

Hannibal was recalled from Italy to meet and overcome, if possible, the Roman general who with his army had invaded Africa. But it was too late; Hannibal was completely defeated in the year 202 B.C. His generous gifts secured for the Carthaginians the best terms which could be obtained for a defeated people, but at best they were severe. Carthage lost her ships, and was compelled, besides, to pay an indemnity. Rome allowed her the privilege, only, of remaining a great commercial city, with no power to make war except through the consent of Rome. By this treaty Carthage passed away as an empire, becoming a Roman city.

Notwithstanding all this loss, the descendants of Ham, as well as those of the brother tribes, grew in numbers. Here and there, villages,



NIMROD.

towns and cities sprang up. It then occurred to them that their people should be brought together and formed into a nation for the settlement of legal business and religious questions. The Phœnicians, another branch of the Hamitic family, but residing north of Palestine, gave us the art of writing. They were also great traders; they built ships and became the first mariners of the world, carrying not only their literature but the Tyrian dyes to all parts of the earth.

An English statesman recently traveling in the far East, noticed that while the people of one section were



well ordered and surrounded with productive fields, there were others quite adjacent that showed a marked contrast. The traveler asked the Sheik of the well-governed district how it came about that his section was more prosperous than adjoining territories. He replied in a characteristic way: "I told these children, my tribesmen, that if they would make me their chief I would take care of them while they tilled the soil. I formed a force to keep off intruders. I keep the peace and they till the fields."

In some such way as this, districts became united, nations arose, and kings were chosen to govern them. No doubt this was the method adopted in establishing the Babylonian Empire—the mother of all empires of the earth and the only one in existence at this time. It was here, as you perhaps remember, that the tower of Babel was planned and partially constructed. The founder of the Babylonian nation was Nimrod, a descendant of Ham, the first great nation builder. He is usually spoken of as a mighty hunter. It is well to note that those qualities which made him a famous hunter gave him genius for controlling armies, causing him to be cool and brave in battle. These were rare traits of combination, making him the early Cæsar of the world. In his day the rivers swarmed with crocodile as well as hippopotami, while in the forest dwelt giant animals. Those who could use the spear, trap and arrow with success, were considered men of resource and courage. Nimrod became so great along all these lines that whenever any one's success or courage was to be measured they compared him with Nimrod. The Bible says, "He began to be a mighty one in the earth." The quotation refers to the fact that he was building an empire. The beginning of his kingdom was Babel. He was a builder of cities, as was also his descendant, Asshur.

Now that the empire had become strong, the people conceived the idea of building a structure not only to perpetuate their name, but as a safe protection in case of invasion. The building was to be made of brick, thoroughly burned. This seems strange to us, when we consider that they had plenty of stone on the plains, and could, according to our way of thinking, have made it much more substantial and durable of that material had they chose. However, that is immaterial to us, except to show that in making it of brick they proved again their inventive genius. The structure was built into a square tower, seven stories high,



THE TOWER OF BABEL.

each tier growing smaller in size as it neared the summit; every tier also differed from the preceding one, not only in size, but in color. The various colors were black, white, orange, blue, scarlet, silver, and gold. How complete the tower was, we do not know. After many years it fell into decay, as all unoccupied temples do. Nebuchadnezzar, the magnificent King of Assyria, restored it 600 years B.C. Its restoration and the building of other works of great merit, excited Nebuchadnezzar's pride and made him glorious throughout the world. The city of Babylon, with its Tower as a center, was the wonder of all the earth and the marvel of ages.

Up to the time of the attempted construction of the tower the people spoke one language, which means that they were one people. It now seemed best to God that the earth should have *many languages* instead of *one*, hence he confused their speech. It is not necessary for us to think that he did it in a moment. He could have done so had he desired, but that is not the way God usually does things. He brings about events in a natural manner. The Bible mentions it as a fact, yet the way it was carried out is not told. Details are not important in God's sight.

When the Roman empire was broken up (410 A.D.) the people of that empire spoke the Latin language. But that language became dead, and in its place sprang up four new languages—the Italian, French, Spanish and Wallachian.

The empire which Nimrod had built through conquest at Babylon, fell to pieces, as empires made by battle are apt to do. His people gradually moved farther and farther from the center, consequently different dialects sprang up. No doubt the confusion was brought about in this way; still, we have never been told. As we said, it does not matter, for God is just as much honored by a tree that takes a thousand years to grow as by a plant which springs up in a night. And so, whether we think he created the confusion of speech in a moment, or built other empires and the language changed that way, makes no material difference.

This, though, we do know, the Lord sent the people out over the earth to find the riches and do His work in the world. By scattering, they would think of nobler things than the suggestion of mere personal name and glory. They became explorers, travelers, scientists, build-



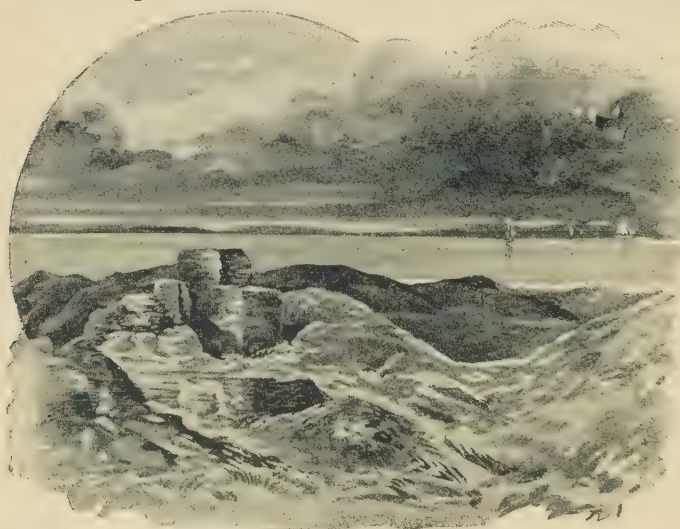
ers of cities, writers of books, and, above all, home-makers rather than makers of towers.

The Tower of Babel may be looked upon as the place where human progress began. It was well named, for it means confusion. A city is a babel, yet the confusion of it is the sign of its order. If you could stand on some high tower, looking down on a city, every cart, carriage and car, man, woman and child, would seem to be going at random; still, when you look at them separately, you find that every one is in the pursuit of some object. The confusion is the fusion of a city's life. The "Tower of Babel" was the ordering of God, and the speech was confused that the world might do better. The tower is associated with Nimrod's name, which means Glorious, or Splendid, although he did not build it. Yet he did found the empire of which the tower became the center, hence it is fitting, in one sense, that it be linked with his name.

The excavation of the cities of Pompeii and Herculaneum, which were buried in 79 A.D., have given us valuable insight into the mode of living of the people of those cities. But while we value the evidence of destroyed cities, as well as the pictures and writings on ancient tablets, yet we value far more highly the unchanged conditions in communities where men and women live and act as they did thousands of years ago. In some portions of the earth such communities remain unchanged

to-day. We rejoice in progression, yet we are glad for the sake of the verification of history that a few places can remain unchanged.

The early manner of educating one's self is not to be ignored, for while people did not have books, they trained their



BABYLON.—RUINS OF PALACE AND THE HANGING GARDENS.

memory to carry poems like Homer's Iliad and other works of merit in their mind, which could be recited at all times with ease. In this way important events were handed down from father to son without change of a single sentence. This is called tradition. Tradition tells us that the people of the earth were commanded to go forth at this time into colonies for the better peopling of the earth, and that they refused. They felt that the success they had achieved had been accomplished with



little or no Divine help. They denied the right of the Almighty to order their place of residence. The confusion of language at the "Tower of Babel" is the sign of their rebellion.

The sobering effects of great enterprises, the widening development of humanity, and the quickening of life everywhere, eventually led them to see the wiser and better plan of God. Colonies went east, west, north and south. Those that reached the sea built ships and ventured out on the deep.

It took many generations to build up a man like Columbus, willing

to cross the ocean, but such a man God can always find when he desires to found a nation. As the people became scattered, their ideas broadened. I have no doubt but there were heartaches and tears. There is never a progression which does not necessitate sacrifice. The kerosene lamp superseded the candle—the electric light the gas.

When Babylon ceased to be the center of ambitious interest, it seemed to those most interested in it, neglected and doomed. But such was not the case. When the people scattered, they built other places, cultivated other fields, brought out other inventions; thus Babylon, instead of becoming the center of a small community, became the pride of a vast empire, more marvelous to the people of that day than ever Rome appeared to the world. The confusion of tongues at the "Tower of Babel" was the real beginning of human civilization on a high plane and a world-wide scale.



## CHAPTER VIII

### ABRAHAM; OR THE FRIEND OF GOD



YOU have doubtless many times seen a tree, with symmetrical form, luxuriant foliage and fine fruit, standing alone on some cliff, and in so prominent a position as to be seen many rods distant. A tree like this will illustrate the life and place of Abraham in history. He is called "The Friend of God"—a name to be valued above everything else and a name applied to no one else.

A number of traditions relative to Abraham's life have been handed down to us. Some of these are worthy of considerable attention, but as space is limited we must confine ourselves to the most important ones. We are told that he began early in life to worship *one* God, while the people about him believed and worshiped many gods. His father's trade was that of a metal-worker and his principal line of work was the manufacture of gods, which the various people purchased and took home to worship. An active and

growing mind like that of Abraham's naturally pondered over these things and ere long began to question the moral right of supplying false gods to the people. In his father's shop he came into contact with all manner of people. He reasoned with them concerning this and that belief, and day by day it became evident to them that he was drifting away from their cherished faith and was more and more embracing the new.

Tradition tells us that once, "when night overshadowed," Abraham, seeing a star, said, "This is my Lord." But when it set, he said: "I like not those that set." Then at another time, when he saw the moon rising, he said: "Verily if my Lord direct me not in the right way, I shall be as one of those who err." Then again, he saw the sun rising, and he said: "This is my Lord. This is greater than the star or moon." But when the sun went down, he disappointedly said: "Oh, my people, I am clear of these things. I shall turn my face to Him who hath made the heavens and the earth."

These sayings of Abraham show us how he gradually turned away from the material things of the world and began to worship the divine. These advanced views, however, brought trouble to his father, who about the same time mourned his brother's death. The death of one son and the radical course adopted by another brought so much sorrow on Terah that he considered the advisability of moving to another country. In those days the going to Canaan was like going to California at the time of the gold strike. California not only had its delightful climate, its mineral riches and beautiful valleys, but was and is the home of the grape, fig, citron, pomegranate, orange, and the cereals. This was about the same picture that travelers drew of Canaan at the time that Terah decided to make a change. He had, however, many things to attract and keep him in the old home. First and foremost, it was in the middle of a great oasis and had a good and settled society. Near at hand was a high rock which formed a natural fortress. Here the people could retire in time of danger, which was no small item in those days, for they never knew when some nomadic chief would swoop down and carry off their goods, their cattle, and some of the women and children, with a number of the leading men. These things were hard to leave, yet, on the other hand, there was freedom in Canaan; there were also the golden sea, the green mountains, and above all Lebanon, so called because the top was covered with snow.

After fully considering the matter, Terah put a notice up in his shop, which read: "This place is for sale." His decision brought surprise and regret. The people disliked to see him as well as his family leave their midst. When they found him immovable, they came in to say good-bye and to wish him God-speed. Their going even the distance of a few hundred miles was as serious a matter in those early

times as the going to America from Europe used to be in the early history of our country. Traveling by caravan with camels was no easy matter. They had to cross a river, a desert, and mountains.

Terah did not realize what he had undertaken until he had traveled one whole day. He then began not only to measure the distance to the new home, but to consider the distance which separated him from the old friends. Seeing it now in all its meaning, he decided to halt. Canaan was on his lips, but the old home was in his heart. "I will go no further," he said, and so right here at Haran he made up his mind to stay. On a bright day when the atmosphere was clear he could see the old place, and at such times it did not seem so far away. We have no knowledge that he ever went back, yet he could have done so had he chosen, and this fact was a great comfort to him, as it is to us all in life. To be able to do as one pleases is always a boon to the human heart. Here at Haran where they stopped was a crossing of roads. Caravans traveling in various directions crossed and re-crossed, always stopping to rest and quench their thirst at the well. Very little is said of Terah after this, except that he died and was buried in Haran—a place which he never quite considered home but simply a stopping place.

As death in the family had, with other things, persuaded Terah to



ABRAHAM'S DEPARTURE FOR CANAAN.



leave the old home, so did Terah's death permit Abraham to move on into Canaan. He did not wish to urge it during his father's life, but now that he was gone he felt at liberty to carry out his former plans. The idea of Canaan was so thoroughly instilled in his life that it was hard to give it up.

We must remember that every act has a spiritual idea within, just as the body has a spirit within. This moving seems in history to have been a material fact only, but inside of it was the spiritual idea. Before Terah's death God had, silently and in secret, commanded Abraham to go to a land that he would show him. Abraham delayed this going on account of his father's age; but when the father passed away, he made every haste possible. This delay had its mission in forming Abraham's character. It became his school, his discipline; hence this period is an important one in the advancement of the world. We ought all to read the full account of it, just as we all ought to read the "log" which contained the daily report of the "May Flower." Every American who wants to know about that good ship which brought the "Pilgrim Fathers" to old Plymouth Rock will find in the "log" an account of each day aboard the ship. The Lord said unto Abraham: "Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will show thee; and I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing; and I will bless them that bless thee and curse him that curseth thee; and in thee shall all the families of the earth be blessed.

"So Abraham departed, as the Lord had spoken unto him. He was seventy and five years old when he departed out of Haran. And Abraham took Sarah his wife, and Lot his brother's son, and all their substance that they had gathered, and the souls that they had gotten in Haran, and they went forth to go into the land of Canaan; and into the land of Canaan they came."

The crossing over the river Euphrates made Abraham a Hebrew, or, as we call it now, an "Emigrant." Only those who are among strangers, or a long way from home, know the full meaning of that word emigrant.

At the entrance to the land of Canaan, Abraham built an altar to the Lord, because God appeared to him there, saying: "Unto thy seed

will I give this land." In olden times men erected altars very much as we raise flags. This altar settled their nationality and expressed their religious belief.

This was usually a delightful land, but just at this time it was suffering from drouth, so Abraham went, for the time being, into Egypt.

Pharaoh, the King of Egypt, was the one figure of whom all men stood in awe. Abraham was no exception, and because of this he fell into trouble. He had heard so much about the king's selfishness that he felt when the Egyptians saw the beauty of his wife they would want her as a wife for the king, and he went so far as to imagine that they would kill and put him out of the way in order to get her. He was perhaps justified in thinking this, yet he should have rested in peace, knowing God would take care of him and his. When the Egyptian princes saw Sarah, they reported her beauty to Pharaoh. Thinking she was Abraham's sister as they had told him, he sent for her, and doubtless would have married her, but God intervened.

Shortly after, Abraham returned to Canaan and prospered in the land. The Bible says: "Abraham was very rich in cattle, in silver and in gold." Again it says: "And Lot also, who went with Abraham, had flocks and herds and cattle and tents. And the land was not able to bear them, that they might dwell together, for their substance was great, so they could not dwell together. And there was a strife between the herdsmen of Abraham's cattle and the herdsmen of Lot's cattle. And Abraham said unto Lot: Let there be no strife, I pray thee, between thee and me and between thy herdsmen and my herdsmen, for we be brethren. Is not the whole land before thee? Separate thyself, I pray thee, from me; if thou wilt take the left hand, then I will take the right; or if thou depart to the right hand, then I will go to the left."

This was not a long speech, but one of the greatest the world has ever read. If it were applied to-day it would not take long to settle a dispute.

In this settlement between Abraham and Lot there was much at stake. Besides this national attachment to the place, the pasture and wells for cattle were a thing of importance to consider. The two men here came into sharp contrast. The generous nature of one and the selfishness of the other are clearly defined. We are told that every



THE PLAIN AND RIVER JORDAN.

great man has some supreme moment in his life—a moment when right and might battle for the supremacy. This moment was Abraham's. Up to this time their lives had run along as smoothly as currents run side by side in a stream. It had begun to seem as if they would ever move on without discord. Now of a sudden a hidden snag causes one to turn to the right, the other to the left.

“And Lot lifted up his eyes and beheld all the plain of Jordan, and it was well watered everywhere, even like the land of Egypt.” This he chose for himself and here he pitched his tent, locating close by the city of Sodom.

He left nothing to Abraham except the hillside, yet possibly even this was Abraham's opportunity. Let us for a moment look at the life of the New Englanders. When these people left Old England they left a fertile land, came to a new country, and settled on stony soil among the Green Mountains. This mountain life called into play just those qualities of sacrifice, courage and economy which have made them a new nation among men. In a like manner we can say that the hillside and the sacrifice were the making of Abraham. It gave him a character. “And the Lord said unto Abraham, after Lot was separated from him, Lift up now thine eyes and look from the place where thou art, northward, and southward, and eastward, and west-

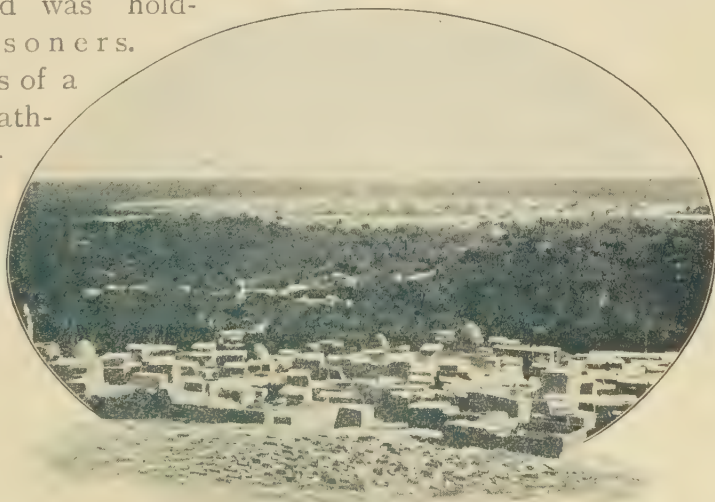


ward. For all the land which thou seest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed forever. I will make thy seed as the dust of the earth; so that if any man can number the dust of the earth, then shall thy seed also be numbered. Arise, walk through the land in the length of it and in the breadth of it; for I will give it unto thee." This is what Abraham saw as he looked from his splendid position on the hillside. I wonder if any one ever loses by making a sacrifice. God paid Abraham for *his* sacrifice.

From this time on various circumstances in Abraham's life led him to be a soldier. Ancient writers affirm that when he came to Damascus, that old, beautiful and famous city, he conquered it in battle. The people tried to drive him out, but when a question of principle became involved Abraham could not be moved. One of the most valuable results of this battle was the capture of Eliezer, who afterwards became his trusted steward.

I say circumstances made him a soldier. The following incident will explain this. One day they brought him word that a king, Chedorlaomer by name, had come down into the Jordan valley, defeated the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah and carried off Lot and his goods, with a great amount of booty besides, and that a still greater calamity resulted in the fact that he had taken captive the women and children of the cities and was holding them as prisoners.

With the quickness of a soldier Abraham gathered up three hundred eighteen picked men, whom he had raised upon his premises, and taking them with him pursued the king like a whirlwind. He planned a night attack, divided his force, surprised the enemy,



DAMASCUS —FROM OLD BURIAL GROUND.

and delivered the charge so well that the enemy, not knowing how many soldiers were in pursuit, fled in confusion, leaving Lot and the spoils of battle behind. Then Abraham took Lot, the women and children, and the goods, back to his own home. On his return, the citizens along the route went out to meet him, showering upon him their congratulations and welcome, just as our citizens to-day go out to meet a victorious commander.

One of these was Melchizedek, the king and priest of Salem. In those days a king was priest by virtue of the office of king. His city was, by natural fortifications, so well defended that the inhabitants felt it was impossible for an enemy to ever take it.

Once when the Jews besieged it, the Jebusites, who were in possession of the city, said in derision, "We will place the blind and lame on the walls to defend us." This was because they thought it was impossible to storm its walls. The Jebusites further said that after the Jews had defeated the blind and lame, then they would put the warriors on the walls. The invading soldiers beat against it like a sea against a wall of rock, but were finally compelled to move on and past the city. Melchizedek, however, was ever mindful of the fact that, even though the city could not be taken, his people could not go outside of the wall until the invaders left the land. He had seen them go north, but did not know how soon they might return; hence it was with an inexpressible sigh of relief that he heard of Abraham's victory. Is it any wonder that in honor and gratitude he went out to meet Abraham and to give him a kingly salutation and priestly blessing? It was also upon this auspicious occasion that Abraham offered tithes to Melchizedek as priest of the "Most High God." In doing this Abraham recognized the high position of the king, who, with no means of defending himself, came to meet and bless him. The ancient Jewish writers and the Psalmist likened him to the Messiah. The order of his priesthood was higher than the common priesthood. The writer to the Hebrews says that "Jesus is a priest forever after the order of Melchizedek," meaning that Jesus was a priest higher than the ordinary priest. It is said that he was without descent, father or mother, and without length of days. This is a poetical and mystical way of putting the fact that no one knew who his parents were, how long he lived, nor when he died. Fancy, imagination, poetry, and rumor have often feasted on the ideal

life of this man, who appeared in this single instance and was never heard of again. Scholars feel pretty sure in asserting that he was a worshiper of the one true God, living a life of purity and peace in the midst of an age of war and corruption. His city was called Peace and he was its king. His life, city, work, and people stand before the world as a beautiful oasis.

The other noted person who met Abraham as he returned a victor was the King of Sodom. He asked Abraham to return the people, saying: "Abraham can keep the goods." Abraham replied: "I have sworn before the Lord that I will not take anything, not even a thread to a shoe-latchet, lest thou shouldst say, I have made Abraham rich." But continued Abraham: "The young men who are with me," naming them, "must have their share of the spoils of battle." Abraham absolutely refused to take anything for himself, for he depended on God only. He was God's soldier, not man's.

That night the Lord appeared to Abraham, saying: "Fear not, Abraham, for I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward." Abraham now called God's attention to the fact that he was childless, that there was no one to bear his name or to carry out the plan of



ABRAHAM OFFERING UP ISAAC.





CARAVAN HALTING IN THE DESERT.

building a nation. It was at this time that he asked God if he might not adopt Eliezer as a son. Then God took him out under the night sky, saying: "I will give you a son. Look now at the stars. As they are for multitude, so shall the number of thy people be." He fixed his promise by the shining stars, and later kept that promise by giving him a son. This son they named Isaac—a name which means laughter, or joy.

Abraham had been called upon to bear many trials in life, but the greatest one came when the Lord asked him to take his son and offer him as a sacrifice at a place which He would show him. He did not hesitate, however, but rose up early in the morning and started on his journey, taking Isaac, two servants and a beast of burden, with wood for the sacrifice, with him. In his belt he carried a knife. He did not know where the place was to be, but God promised to show him and he left it all to Him. After going some distance the mountain where the sacrifice was to take place was pointed out. When he reached it he told his servants to remain behind while he and his son went up into the mountain. His faith comes out very beautifully in what he says: "Tarry ye here, and I and the lad will go yonder and worship and we will surely return again."

Notice his words: "*We* will surely return again." This shows the quality of his faith. Though he was told to sacrifice his son, yet he knew that Isaac would surely return because God had promised to raise up a great nation through him.

God did indeed save Isaac and literally furnished another sacrifice instead. The whole reason of the trial is not given, but I am inclined to think that through this test of suffering God wished to show Abraham two great truths—the first one of which was that sacrifice did not consist in outraging humanity or destroying human life; the second, Jesus hinted at when he said: "Abraham saw my day and was glad," meaning that the trial of his faith opened the doors of the future; it revealed to him facts which men and women had never yet clearly seen or known. A thing revealed to us from the Father, either by dreams, revelations, or intuition, has a wonderful influence on our life. This was so with Abraham and with Jesus. They lived to bring that power into the world—a power which was revealed in the things they saw.

Abraham, who had originally been called Abram, "the lofty father,"

was from this time on called Abraham, "the father of multitudes." His inner sight enabled him to view the vast procession of men from his day to the day of Jesus, and from the lamb caught in the bush, which God provided for sacrifice, to Jesus, "the Lamb of God slain from the foundation of the world." It was doubtless these pictures that influenced and benefited the world, though we do not know that he ever told it as such. We do know, though, that God in some such a way corrected and is still correcting mistaken ideas of religious worship.

Abraham was said to be "the friend of God." This saying became common because of the familiar way in which angels appeared before him. The life of the Arab of to-day, living in his tent, is similar to the life lived in Abraham's day. If we see the Arab, we can see what Abraham was like. His tent was black, composed of skins, and was distinguished from the others by a cloak of brilliant scarlet. He wore a cord of gold about his head, binding it on with a handkerchief, much like a turban. During a march he carried a spear in his hand, and when ready to encamp he designated the spot by driving the spear into the ground.

His wife, the princess, dwelt in her own tent, holding herself ever ready to bake cakes and prepare the usual meal for the guests. When evening came the men, women and children, with their flocks, herds and camels, made a scene not soon to be forgotten as they camped around the open fire. The tent of the chief was stationed at the center, while the others were arranged about it. At noon they rested within the tents, away from the heat and sun, but at evening they came out and sat at the door of the tent to enjoy the moon and stars. This life was free and independent.

When on a journey, the chief rode at the head of the caravan, his spear in hand, just as the Arab does to-day. The camels became the dray for the baggage as well as the carriage for the women and children. This is a type of civilization which has never changed.

The life of Abraham brings to mind an event in the life of a young fellow whom I once knew and to whom his father talked important matters. This boy, when growing, won the affection of the head operator of a leading telegraph station. Once when a battle was raging, the operator received from a friend a secret message giving the progress of the battle but asking him not to disclose it. The operator wanted to





HEBRON.—SHOWING MOSQUE MACHPELAH.

tell it to some one—the news was such that he felt that he *must*—and he told it to the boy whom he could trust. It may seem strange that so great a secret should have been trusted to a boy, yet some boys are stronger and truer than men and can

keep a secret better. As he was walking along the street that evening, bearing this secret message in his heart, a man threw his hat up in the air, crying with a loud voice, “Victory!” Then the boy felt relieved; he had no further secret to keep.

God trusted Abraham the same way, saying, “Shall I not tell him this?” meaning some secret which Abraham was to keep. He was known as “the friend of God” because God gave him secrets to keep.

The domestic life of both Abraham and Sarah was ideal. They had shared the hardships and adventures and the glories of Canaan together, and in all things she was his able adviser and counselor. Further than this, they had known each other from childhood, having grown up together in the land of Ur. When she died, much of his life went away with her. They dwelt for many years in a large tent under the shade of one oak. That oak, by the way, was so large and strong that it remained standing over 2,000 years after Abraham’s death.

“And Abraham stood up from before his dead and spake unto the sons of Heth, saying: I am a stranger and a sojourner with you.

Give me a possession of a burying place with you, that I may bury my dead out of my sight. And the children of Heth answered Abraham, saying unto him:

“Hear us, my lord; thou art a mighty prince among us; in the choice of our sepulchres bury thy dead; none of us shall withhold from thee his sepulchre, but that thou mayest bury thy dead.”

On hearing this generous offer Abraham told them he would like to have Machpelah, known as a double cave. He asked them to consult the man who owned it and use their good offices that he might purchase it. When the owner learned that Abraham desired the caves, he offered to present them to him, but with that same spirit of independence as of old, Abraham refused to accept the gift. He said he would like to buy them, but could not accept the gift. The owner, seeing his earnestness in the matter, said it was “worth four hundred shekels in silver; what is that between thee and me?” They had no coin as we do to-day. In settling for them they weighed out the correct amount in lumps of silver. The cave stood in the midst of a grove of olive trees, on the slope of a table-land and in the same place where Abraham made his first encampment. It was called the valley of Hebron. I have spoken thus at length about this burial place because this purchase fixed the home of the tribe. A wandering tribe calls that place home where its dead lie buried.

As the eagle flies to the old high rock, so does Abraham go back at last to the desert's edge, on the border where the old and new life met. There by those wells, beneath the tall, feathery tamarisk trees, he died in his tent. There Ishmael and Isaac met, taking the Prince to the cave and burying him beside Sarah his wife. Thus singularly and beautifully does his life end.

## CHAPTER IX

### LOT'S SAD STORY: OR THE DESTRUCTION OF SODOM AND GOMORRAH

SODOM and Gomorrah are names linked with circumstances so appalling that one can never forget them. Their destruction was inevitable; this we see clearly when we come to view the customs of their people and the location of their cities.

These things were

facts beyond re-

demption,

and ended in

one stupen-

dous trag-

edy. They

were de-

stroyed by

fire — by

lightning from above and by

streams of fire from beneath.

Other cities have disappeared and

other nations have been lost, but no

incident of destruction seems to

have gathered about it so much

of profound darkness as the annihila-

tion of these two ill-fated cities—

Sodom and Gomorrah.

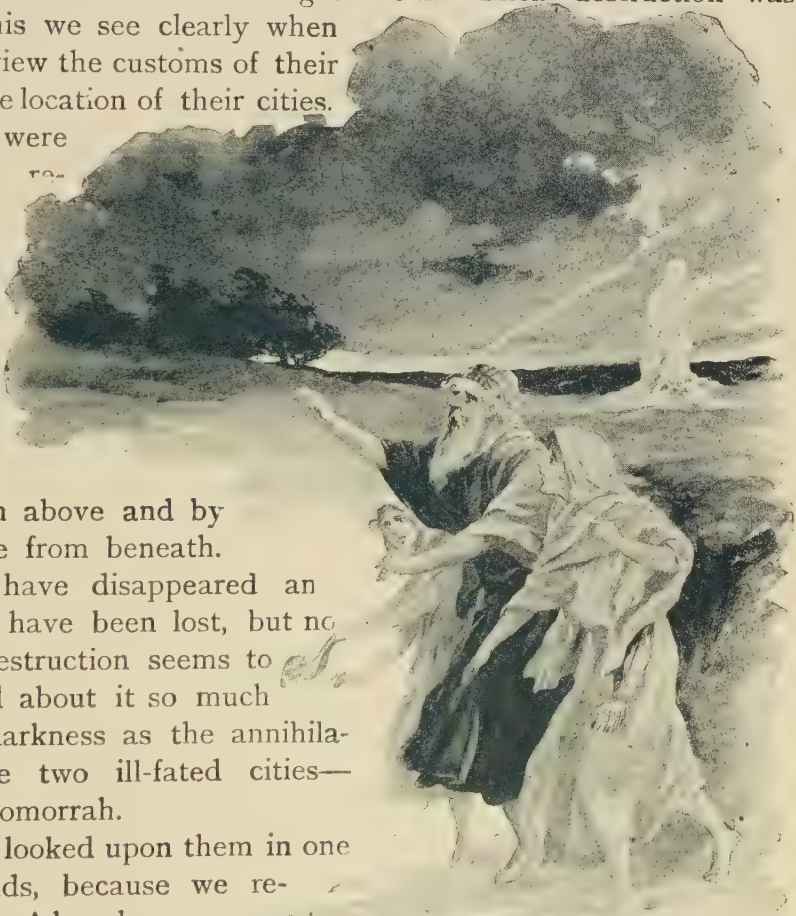
We have looked upon them in one

sense as friends, because we re-

joiced when Abraham

brought back the women

and children who had been



THE FLIGHT OF LOT



taken prisoners by Chedorlaomer. We saw their smiles and heard their shouts of joy as they stopped to greet friend after friend—yes, we became interested in them, and now regret that our interest did not fall on nobler men and women. Had Lot not been taken captive, God would probably never have redeemed them. The result of a successful battle in behalf of a good man saved them.

Nearly every nation leaves behind some memorial which fittingly represents its influence on the world and its achievements in society, which can be read long after the people themselves are gone. These memorials are looked upon with interest. They stand as a testimony to the moral worth of the people, and are in consequence a lasting benefit to the world. Had Sodom and Gomorrah left monuments, they would have given proofs of a downfallen people. Nothing, however, remains—no footprint, no leaf of a manuscript, no voice even has survived the destruction.

The story is like a ship which left port on a bright day with many people on board, laden with a cargo bound for foreign lands. It goes, but it never returns—no boat, no spar, no message, no person escapes to tell what happened. That it existed, we know; that it sailed, we are certain; why it never came back is a mystery. Somewhere, shrouded in silence, it rests.

These two cities, like the rich-freighted vessel, witnessed the rising of the sun one morning and then disappeared.

You will recall the fact that when Abraham and Lot parted, "Lot pitched his tent toward Sodom." This, at the time, looked to be a master-stroke, and doubtless would have been, had Lot used his influence for good. His decision reminds me of two friends who went west to bargain for two farms. The selfish one secured the one containing the natural advantages, leaving the other to take what was left. So far as I know, the latter made no complaint; was quite contented, and went to work with a will. In time, however, the tables were turned, for it so happened that a town was founded close by the friend who settled on the second best farm. It grew and became a city of large inhabitants. Soon his farm was converted into city lots. He became, in less than forty years, not only a well-to-do real-estate man, but the mayor of the city.

The world would have said that Lot did a shrewd thing in pitch-

ing his tent toward Sodom. Had he possessed the right principles, been a noble and unselfish man, his influence for good might have worked wonders for both him and the two cities. His selfishness, though, put himself and family in jeopardy. Gradually they traveled the road to ruin.

When the angel told Abraham that the cities were to be destroyed, he endeavored to find some way to save them. He said to God, If *fifty* good people can be found, will you not save the cities for that number? A promise was given him that if there were that many righteous people the cities would be spared. Abraham was known among them as a warrior victorious in battle. He no doubt visited Lot, as well as some of the leading men and women, thus acquainting himself with what was going on. After investigation, he had little hope that fifty righteous people could be found, and he then said to God, "If there are *ten* righteous in the cities, will they be saved?" The promise was then given that if *ten* good people could be found the decree would be countermanded.

The night before the destruction, God sent his angels to Sodom to warn Lot of the danger. The evening was fair—so fair that all the city



THE DESTRUCTION OF SODOM.

was on the street enjoying its beauty. They found Lot sitting at the gate of the city. History tells us that he invited the angels into his house, but that they did not wish to remain, knowing that the men of the city would make trouble. It further says that their fears were realized, for the evening meal was no more than finished when a great, vile crowd gathered about the house. Lot went out and endeavored to reason with them; but they said, "This man" (meaning Lot) "came only to stay with us for the convenience of our city—he never intended to become one with us. He now seeks to emphasize his superiority by becoming a judge over us." They then vexed his soul by their wickedness, and would doubtless have done him bodily harm, but when the crowd attempted to carry out their threats the angels pulled Lot inside the door and closed it.

These messengers of God then told Lot and his family, if they had any friends in the city whom they desired to save, to get them ready at once, for God was going to destroy it. Lot immediately sought out the two young men who were engaged to marry his daughters, telling them the story foretold by the angels. The young men thought Lot was telling them an incredible story and they would not listen to him. He was compelled to leave them to their fate.

Just as the morning was growing gray on the far eastern sky, the angels took hold of Lot's hand, the hand of his wife, and the hands of the two daughters, and hastened them away. The injunction was that they were not to linger in the plain, but flee to the mountains, and to look not behind them, for the destroyer was already flying.

Now comes the strange part of the story. Lot's wife looked back, and was turned, as the Bible says, into a pillar of salt. She was first suffocated by gas, and encrusted by the chemicals in the air, principally salt. The scriptures put a sign there, saying: "Remember Lot's wife." Each will have to study for himself what that means.

Abraham arose early in the morning and looked toward the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah. As he gazed off over the plains he saw the smoke rise as though coming from a vast furnace. It was a terrible sight. We are not told plainly that Abraham prayed for Lot, but he undoubtedly did, and the Bible gives us just a hint of it. I have no doubt that Abraham had been promised that Lot would be saved when



## THE DESTRUCTION OF SODOM AND GOMORRAH



THE DEAD SEA.

he learned that there were not even ten good men there. Lot was saved for Abraham's sake, not for his own, for, though vastly better than many of the Sodomites, he had degenerated, and his children were even worse than he.

The shaking of a bridge, or the hammering of a wheel on the track, will change the structure of steel. The outward appearance frequently remains the same, yet it breaks because of the change. Lot came of a good family, yet he was changed through the influence of bad company.

These cities were situated on a rich plain. If you will recall the account of the battle in which Lot was taken prisoner, you will find that the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah, when defeated, fled toward some pits. They fell into them and perished. Those pits were either petroleum wells, or asphalt springs, or both. The country about the city was full of pitch, oil, natural gas, and wells of salt impregnated with sulphur. The ground on which the cities were built was the same kind. Two things undoubtedly happened. God brought forth a storm with lightning, which fired the pitch and the gas. There was a subsidence of the earth, and at the same time the earth was opened. Gas and steam mingled, throwing salt water, sulphur and smoke into the air. The fumes destroyed every living thing.

To-day, a sea, which is rightfully named the Dead Sea, is supposed to be the site where once the cities of Sodom and Gomorrah

lifted their towers into the sky. The deep chasm caused by the breaking of the earth was filled with water so salty and so dense that the existence of a living thing has been impossible. The spot, if we were to judge, is indeed dark enough to be the cemetery of several wicked cities.

It is singular that we have no mention of Abraham and Lot ever meeting again. All we know is that immediately after the destruction of the cities Abraham moved south.

Lot believed that his people were the only ones left alive on the face of the earth. He thought that Abraham had been lost and all in his house by the great destruction of the early morning. *We* know differently, but the manner of both men leads us to believe that each thought the other destroyed.

## CHAPTER X

### REBEKAH ; OR THE FIRST RECORDED LOVE STORY

WE have in the life of Rebekah and Isaac the first love story recorded in the Bible. Rebekah was the daughter of Bethuel and the sister of Laban. She became the wife of Isaac, a young man whose life was pure and gentle and full of faith in God. As Isaac grew to manhood, Abraham, his father, began to think seriously about his future career, and decided it would not be best for him to choose a wife from among the people of Canaan, where they were then dwelling. In consequence of this Abraham concluded to send Eliezer, his trusted servant, back to their former home to find a wife for Isaac. This matter was a most serious one, since it affected the future of the nation.

Abraham was "now old" and "well stricken with years." His wife, Sarah, was dead. Age and the thought of death made him anxious for Isaac's future and hastened him on to action until one day he called Eliezer to his side, asking him to take an oath that he would carry out his wishes regarding his son's marriage. Eliezer agreed and took an oath to that effect. The manner of



ELIEZER AND REBEKAH



taking the oath was a peculiar one, but after all, the usual one adopted in those far-away times. Eliezer put his hand under the thigh of Abraham and promised in the name of God to do as he was bid.

That oath contained a clause stipulating that Eliezer was not to arrange for a wife for Isaac from among the Canaanites; nor was he to persuade him to go back to the old home to live, but to remain in Caanan, the Promised Land, which God had promised to Abraham and his seed. The last sentence referred to Eliezer's question: "If I shall not find a wife for Isaac, shall I take him back to the land from whence he came?" So Abraham replied in a solemn way that his son was not to be taken back, that the life and liberty of his house from that time on was to be enlinked with the land of Canaan.

Abraham comforted Eliezer by telling him that he would not be left in this matter entirely to his own judgment, for he said, "God shall send his angels before thee."

That declaration and fact marks this story—the first recorded love story—makes it fascinating because angels are interested in it. After due time Eliezer made ready for the journey. He selected ten camels and drivers, made arrangements for their support, planned presents for the bride, as well as comforts for her and her attendants, on the return trip.

Abraham was very wealthy. The procession moving out was like the embassy of a king, seeking a princess for the son of a king. It was watched by many eyes in Abraham's household, prayers also followed, and it would not be strange if the shoe was thrown after it, as it is tossed after the bride to-day, by the young people of the feast. The shoe is ancient in this sort of history. And so the procession went forth. The music of the camels' footfalls kept time with the bells on their necks, and thus it was they swept out of view, the bells growing fainter and fainter till they died away on the Syrian air.

When Eliezer approached the city of Nahor he began to plan for the serious part of his mission. He compelled his camels to kneel down by a well outside the city. It was now evening, the time when the women who drew water would come forth to the well.

Eliezer commenced to talk to the Lord, so that he might have a clear understanding of the situation; that he might be guided in making a wise choice. He desired Heaven to choose for him, saying, "O

Lord God of my master Abraham, I pray thee send me good speed this day, and show kindness unto my master Abraham. Behold, I stand here by the well of water, and the daughters of the men of the city come out to draw water. Now let it come to pass that the damsel to whom I shall say, Let down thy pitcher, I pray thee, that I may drink; and she shall say, Drink, and I will give thy camels drink also;



ELIEZER AT THE HOME OF BETHUEL.

let the same be she that thou hast appointed for thy servant Isaac, and thereby shall I know that thou hast shown kindness to my master."

Whilst he was praying to God and considering these things, Rebekah, who was young and beautiful, came with a pitcher on her shoulder. She walked down the stone steps to the well, drew water and filled her pitcher. As she came up, Eliezer, being attracted by her beauty and grace, addressed her. He spoke the words agreed upon between the Lord and himself. Greatly to his surprise, the young woman replied in the very language which he had asked she might in case she proved to be the one selected of God as a wife for Isaac.

Eliezer permitted her to draw water sufficient for his camels, as was

the custom. He then took from his pocket a golden ornament for her forehead and bracelets for her arms, putting them upon her. All this time he was wondering if she, so full of life, so strong, beautiful, willing and hospitable, would be willing to go back to Canaan as a promised wife to Isaac. He then asked if he and his servants could be provided with food and shelter at her house.

She answered in a reliant and hearty manner, saying there was plenty of room, shelter and food for all.

Running home, she burst into the circle with radiant eye and glowing cheek. The costly jewels on her head and arms told the story of the romance fallen to her from heaven. Surely angels had attended and led the way. Laban immediately hastened to the well, giving Isaac's servant a hearty welcome and calling him the blessed of the Lord. Eliezer then went to the home, and as soon as the camels had been ungirded and the loads removed he was taken into the house and invited to partake of refreshments, but he said: "I shall not touch food till I have related my errand."

Then the father, mother and brother listened to the story of Abraham's life; of his growth and power; of his wealth in herds and his great desire that his Isaac marry among his kindred in the land of the Chaldees. After relating these things, Eliezer said, "Now if you will deal kindly with my master Abraham, give Rebekah as a wife to his son Isaac."

Feeling that it was arranged by God, they could neither say yes nor no, but left Rebekah to decide for herself. They then called her in, asking if she was willing to go back with Eliezer as a bride for Isaac. She replied that she was. You must remember that God took away from her all fear and gave her instead a willing heart in the matter. You have heard of love at first sight, in which joy ever comes? When Isaac and Rebekah met, God made it love on sight, as we shall see.

Rebekah's parents and brother asked that she might remain at home a full year or ten months at least. Eliezer objected to this request, saying that the Lord was preparing the way. They then called in Rebekah again and she said she would go.

The bridal procession went away from Nahor with far more ceremony than it had gone out from Canaan—and no wonder, for there was a bride now, going to the headship of a great tribe, to be the mother



of a great race. In starting out, there was some uncertainty; now there was none. Eliezer returned with joyful haste, for he had found and won a regal, worthy and beautiful bride for Abraham's son. The procession took them by surprise. No one was looking for it yet. Eliezer had forced the march. He was in a fever to bear the good news.

Far off in the fields was the solitary figure of a man who had gone there to pray. It was evening, and as his soul was going up to God he heard the music of bells chiming on the evening air. "He lifted up his eyes and saw, and behold, the camels were coming." Isaac had intended to meet the procession, but he did not know where. God knew, though, and planned the meeting. It ended as it had begun—a heavenly romance. Soon as Isaac saw the caravan he hastened to meet it. In the meantime, Rebekah saw him coming, and she said to Eliezer: "Who is this man that walketh to meet us?" Eliezer replied: "It is my master Isaac." She then dismounted from the camel, and when her servants had put her veil over her face, as was customary in Oriental countries, she walked out and met her husband. Isaac and Rebekah loved each other from that hour. From a distance God had brought them together and He would not suffer them to be disappointed.

Isaac, who had been much grieved over the loss of his mother, took Rebekah to live in the same tent where Sarah his mother had dwelt. She became not only a comfort to him personally, but a mother and a comfort to the tribe as well.

This is, then, the first love story of the Bible. It is picturesque and quaint, giving us the customs and manners of our fathers ages ago. It gives us also the happy arrangements made by God and endorsed by the angels.

Following the details of love-making, we find that Isaac brought Rebekah to Beersheba. You will remember that this place was an oasis on the edge of a desert. Here Abraham had dug many wells. It had cost him much labor, for he had primitive tools; but Abraham's perseverance was such that nothing could restrain him. The wells, the beautiful groves of trees, and their proximity to the desert and the grass lands, made the selection peculiarly acceptable and profitable to a life like that of Abraham and Isaac. In the desert there are oases where flocks can be protected from wild animals and easily guarded



REBEKAH DEPARTING FROM HER FATHER'S HOUSE.

from robbers. Water in the Eastern countries is the one thing needful—the one thing sought above everything else. The wells at Beersheba show the traces of age. Some have tops of marble, others rough stone, but all alike show the marks of centuries.

It was characteristic of Abraham to allow no dispute to come up regarding these wells. In order to settle beyond doubt that they belonged to him and his family, he invited the King of the Philistines to the place, at which time an oath in the Arab form was

taken and sealed. It was called “the well of seven” and “the well of the oath,” Abraham having given seven lambs for the well. The lambs not only paid for the wells, but their transfer to the king was a seal upon the oath which was taken, that Abraham *owned the wells* and the king agreed not to disturb him in his possessions.

In this way, though young, Rebekah became the mother of the tribe, the princess. That is really what Sarah means—Princess. It was considerate of Abraham to permit her to take this high place, but it shows his trust in God in leading Eliezer to select a wife of noble blood. Isaac did not see Rebekah's face till they were alone in the tent. She then unveiled herself, after the Eastern custom, which was strictly adhered to in high positions.

It may seem surprising, perhaps, that Rebekah started off in a moment, as it were, on her journey to meet her husband. To-day it requires time to give a wedding. The bride needs time to prepare her wedding trousseau. In those days it was the duty of the bridegroom to furnish this feature of the occasion. As Abraham was rich,

the outfit for the bride could be fitting and complete. Eliezer not only placed costly jewels and ornaments upon Rebekah at the well, but he carried others with him, as well as robes and raiment of all kinds. We must not seem surprised that she left home seemingly unprepared in apparel. She knew what to expect. Eliezer had said Abraham was rich. The proof of the wealth was shown by the gifts to the bride, to her nurses, slaves, parents, and relatives. There was no stint, but royalty, showing the earnestness of a prince seeking a princess. Laban, the brother of Rebekah, upheld for the right belonging to the family. When he was satisfied that all was as represented—made plain by a series of presents and a sufficiency of apparel—then all was well.

Rebekah's duties as hostess demanded that she be able to bake good cake, or a preparation similar to our bread. On the home education depended her ability to make good bread and prepare proper foods. At all times she had the help of her servants. These servants were frequently great men and women, of high intelligence and great character, to whom were intrusted the most important affairs of the family. They were as loyal as soldiers to a king.

Rebekah now had to follow in the footsteps of a great woman. Her position was responsible, and sometimes full of care for the sick and needy of the tribe. But she was equal to all this. The value of a wife cannot be overstated, and especially to one like Isaac. He was of a quiet and meditative nature—perhaps inclined to be a bit melancholy. His mother's strong nature had been a sustaining and directing force in his life. Rebekah was the very opposite in character to Isaac. She

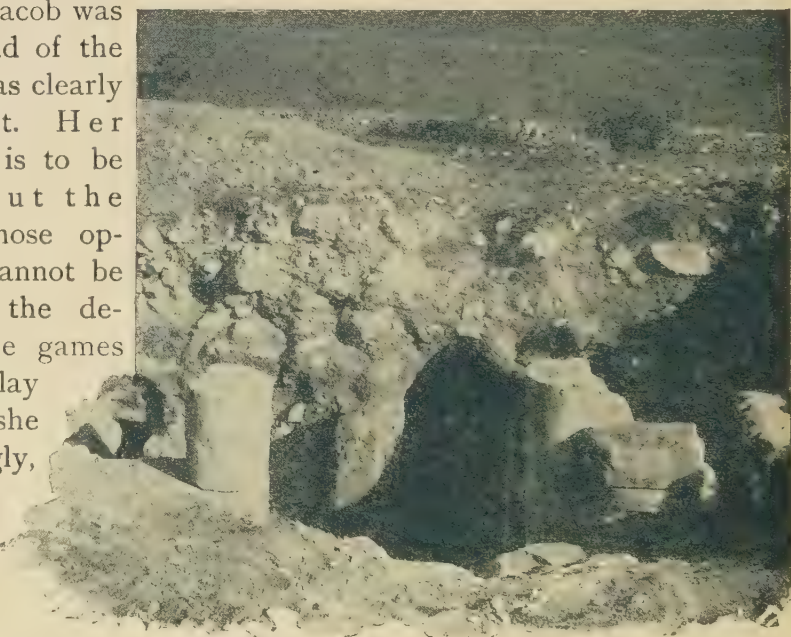


REBEKAH ARRIVING AT THE HOME OF ISAAC.



was strong, alert, brave, full of courage and resource—a woman of opinions, quick to think and to see, ambitious to attain the best and reach the highest. The Canaanite people she had reason to distrust. If Sodom and Gomorrah were a representative type of the Canaanites, she was not favorably disposed toward them. She was greatly dissatisfied because her eldest son Esau married a daughter of these people, and it is no wonder that when Jacob, her youngest son, arrived at a marriageable age, she turned her eyes to her own tribe in far-away Mesopotamia. The future ruling woman must, she said, have different ideas from those prevailing among the women of Canaan. So it became her judgment that the birthright or headship of the tribe should be vested in Jacob. The mother saw Jacob's plainness and knew Esau's brilliancy, yet she perceived also the courage in Jacob which would make a king and the weakness in Esau which would render him unfit for the kingship of the tribe. So when there came a conflict regarding the best man for the headship, she threw all her force toward Jacob. With her it was not a sentiment, but a future. She comprehended that a future nation was at stake, and she acted accordingly.

We do not like intrigue—it is wrong; but Heaven had already decided that Jacob was to be the head of the tribe. She was clearly in the right. Her *method* alone is to be questioned, but the method of those opposed to her cannot be justified. In the descent into the games of those who play for crowns, she played strongly, to the full issue of the case, and won. She



JACOB'S WELL.

did right in a wrong way. But posterity, while condemning her method, approves her choice and coincides with the judgment of the Scripture, that Jacob was the man for the headship of the tribe. She planned for and won for Jacob. She is the early type of the vigorous and ambitious women sovereigns of the world. If some feminine trait seems lacking in her character, it is *only seeming*. At an hour when the state needed her, she interposed as a queen. It was not a question of sex then, it was a question of victory.

The marriage of Isaac and Rebekah stands as the ideal marriage among patriarchs. They are pointed out by historians as the model husband and wife. She was a superb woman. Abraham had more than one wife, but Isaac had only one; that one was Rebekah. This affection for one another made their home the model home and life of the early family. If in the midst of confusing events, where great things were at stake, she came to the front, we must remember that she was keenly alive to the honor of the family. No doubt this high stand was that which impressed Jacob to remember the birthright. It converted him from a plain, conniving man into one who stood an equal before Pharaoh. That was the greatest test which could be given him. It is undoubtedly due to his mother's dream—a great mother's dream, which kept him strong. The dream of Rebekah. She was worthy to sleep among the great dead in the cave of Machpelah, that early Westminster of the chosen race.



JACOB AT THE HOUSE OF LABAN.



## CHAPTER XI

### JACOB AND ESAU; OR WINNING A BIRTHRIGHT

JACOB and Esau were twin brothers, yet they differed radically from the very beginning of life. Esau was open, generous, broad-minded and yet fickle. He possessed many gifts, but his irresolute nature destroyed his ambition and killed his prospect in life.

Jacob, on the other hand, was secretive and cautious, but physically weak. Yet we cannot help admiring his persistence and perseverance. He never gave up. This cannot be said of Esau, for the Scripture tells us that he came in from the field hungry one day and sold his birthright to his brother for a savory bit of pottage. It was a fatal moment of weakness, and because of his lack of resistance he rendered useless a

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JACOB RECEIVING THE BLESSING OF ISAAC.

unwisely, and this, in connection with the fact that he was an impulsive hunter and fond of a roaming life, shows he was not a fit person to govern religious tribes. "He did eat and drink, and rose up, and went his way. Thus Esau despised his birthright."

While our indignation naturally rises against Jacob, as a result of the tears which he caused his brother to shed, and because of the deception he practiced upon his father and the bargains he made in his prayers, yet he turned out a good man, although never a very happy one, and deserves greater credit in the long run than Esau. He was prudent and distrustful to the last, as we find when Joseph sent for him to come to the land of Egypt. It was difficult to convince him that he was not being deceived by his sons, and he would not go till he saw the wagons and gifts which had been sent up by Joseph from Egypt.

The promise which was given to Abraham could never have been woven into the life of the fickle Esau, but it seemed quite appropriate to "the plain man dwelling in tents," like Jacob. Through years of suffering Jacob became steady of purpose, and honored the birthright to the last. He loved what he loved with an everlasting love.

With these words of introduction relative to the character of the two brothers, let us now take up the details of their lives. We shall deal in this chapter with the two brothers up to the point where they part on the summit of the mountain. In the next chapter we shall deal with Jacob from the moment of his parting with his brother Esau up to the time of his death in the land of Egypt.

From the time of the birth of these twin boys God had said that Jacob should hold the honor of the birthright. That meant he was to be the leader of the tribe. This should have settled the matter, and each ought to have been trained with that understanding in view. The two boys were vastly different in their make-up. Esau was a hunter. The free life he led fitted him for a leader of those men who had no settled purpose in life, no occupation. In time he became the head of a clan of raiders. Jacob, on the other hand, was never absent from home. He had the care of the flocks and herds and looked after the interests of the tribe. Thus one grew to a life of indolence and pleasure, while the other grew in knowledge and wisdom.

Jacob was with his mother much of the time. She had left Mesopotamia to become the princess of a nation. She selected Jacob for

the leader of the tribe because he had the necessary qualification. She kept the future as well as the present welfare of the nation in view, and Jacob showed the result of her training in his undying persistence. Her son must be as true to the national idea as she had been. This thought she bred into Jacob because he would receive it; Esau would not. No mere generous, indolent man like Esau must be intrusted with that which she had sacrificed home and people for.

Both boys were brought up in the home of Abraham, their grandfather, until his death. They were then fifteen years of age. Abraham's fame and achievement ought and doubtless did, stimulate them to nobler ideals. His lofty thought and the story of his nation, should have impressed both that a high, settled purpose must be in the heart of him who leads a nation.

Jacob had thought of all this. His grandfather's life made a deep impression on him. One day Esau came in hungry from the field, where he had been hunting. Jacob was making a mess of pottage. Its savory fumes appealed to the hungry man. Esau asked for the pottage. Jacob said if Esau would give him the birthright he might have the pottage. He bartered the leadership of the race for a meal. Esau could have had all he wanted by going only a few steps further, where his father's servants would have served him. He despised a priceless position and showed his character in the transaction.

His second mistake was his marriage. You will remember the care that Abraham exercised in bringing about the marriage between Isaac and Rebekah. Marriage did much to decide the future of both Esau and Jacob. Progress with Jacob came by degrees from a shepherd life to that of a settled nation, which was furthered by an alliance with a good family. When Rebekah came to Isaac she brought with her to Canaan the tastes of a settled life. This was the case also when Jacob married Rachel. It was different with Esau. His wives were idolaters, they had lived a roaming life. The children born to such nations inherited nomadic instincts. Hence, Esau's children would inherit those instincts natural to Arabs wandering unimproved from place to place. Nor did he respect the wishes of his parents in his marriage. Once he brought home two young Hittite maidens as his wives, and showed his father that *his* and his grandfather's principles had no influence upon him. The marriages of Esau had been such a failure that



the mother felt great care should be exercised in selecting a bride for Jacob, which came about as follows:

Isaac, who was now old, felt that the time had arrived to give his parental blessing to his elder son, Esau, as was the custom. So he asked him to take his bow, quiver and arrows, bring him in a venison and prepare it in a savory manner, that they might eat together, and that he would then bestow his blessing upon him. Conferring a birth-right on a son was similar to making a will. It was, though, more than *that*—it conferred God's blessing and was like a prophecy from God, through the father to the son. This will reads as follows: "Therefore God give thee of the dew of heaven and the fatness of the earth, and plenty of corn and wine. Let people serve thee and nations bow down to thee; be lord over thy brethren, and let thy mother's sons bow down to thee; cursed be every one that curseth thee, and blessed be he that blesseth thee."

The climax of it is contained in the sentence: "Be lord over thy brethren and let thy mother's sons bow down to thee." This means he was to govern all who constituted the tribe. We are told that Rebekah heard Isaac speak to Esau, and knowing that if her desires were to be accomplished Jacob must receive the blessing, she at once called Jacob and commanded him to get two kids quickly that she might prepare the savory meat of which Isaac was so fond, and because Esau was a hairy man and Jacob smooth-skinned, she covered his hands and his neck with the skin of the kid that he might deceive his father; she also commanded him to put on the clothes of Esau that the deception might be more complete. Jacob disguised himself as he was commanded, easily deceived the father, who was blind, and obtained the blessing designed for his brother. This was just concluded when Esau returned. History further says, when Esau learned that his father had blessed Jacob, "He cried with a great and exceeding bitter cry and said unto his father, Bless me, even me also, O my father." It is sometimes hard to restrain our tears as we read the pathetic appeal: "Hast thou not reserved a blessing for me?"

"And Isaac answered and said unto Esau: Behold, I have made him thy lord and all his brethren have I given him for servants, and with corn and wine have I sustained him; and what shall I do now unto thee, my son?"

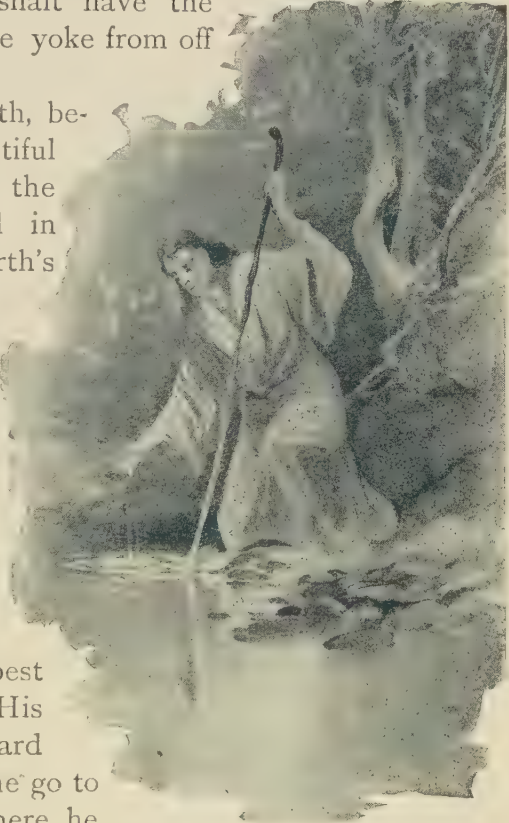
"And Esau said unto his father: Hast thou but one blessing, my father? Bless me, even me also, my father. And Esau lifted up his voice and wept.

"And his father answered and said unto him, Behold, thy dwelling shall be the fatness of the earth and of the dew of heaven from above, and by thy sword shalt thou live, and shalt serve thy brother; and it shall come to pass when thou shalt have the dominion that thou shalt break the yoke from off thy neck."

We have quoted this at length, because it is one of the most beautiful passages in literature and one of the most prophetic. Esau did dwell in the open sky, away from the earth's fertility, and he and his after a time became soldiers and at last broke off the yoke of Jacob, becoming themselves the kings of Israel in the family of Herod. They were magnificent men, yet they possessed all that untrustworthiness which marked their ancestor Esau.

Jacob, who had taken advantage of his brother, felt it was best to leave home for a time. His mother, too, was solicitous in regard to his marriage and urged that he go to the old home in Mesopotamia, where he might find a wife of his choice.

To Jacob she said: "Now therefore, my son, obey my voice; and arise, flee thou to Laban my brother, and tarry with him a few days until thy brother's fury turn away; until thy brother's anger turn away from thee and he forget that which thou hast done unto him; then will I send and fetch thee from thence. Why should I be deprived of you both in one day?" Jacob went, and, strange as it may seem, the few days' absence stretched into twenty years. He may never have seen his mother again.



JACOB HALTING FOR REST.

There seemed to be no sorrow—at least, not great sorrow—for the parting was intended to be only for a season. He departed alone, without a caravan, without a single companion, only a staff in his hand. No pilgrim ever left home with less pomp than did he on this journey.

Let us turn for a moment to the household out of which he had gone. When it became known that he had departed, the impression went out that he had gone to the far east for a wife. The simple words in the Bible chronicling Jacob's departure are: "And Jacob went out from Beersheba and went towards Haran." This was in opposition to Abraham's policy, for he had said his people, at least his son Isaac, should not return to the home land. He felt that Destiny was not backward, but forward, and that Isaac must not go back to Haran. Jacob's first night out revealed his future to him. "The sun was set" and he prepared for the night by making a pillow of stones. He had walked on and on until he was on the crest of a great mountain, which extended like a vast backbone before him. As he lay there, his eyes unchecked by tent or house, looking up into the sky, he fell asleep and dreamed that he saw a stairway reaching to heaven, and that angels were ascending and descending. He then, upon awaking, said: "This is the house of God and this is the gate of heaven."

The next morning he rose up early, and taking the stones he had used for pillows, poured oil upon them and called the place Bethel—"the house of God." These stones, anointed with oil, were in existence long before temple and church.

Jacob then continued his journey, going among those people whom Abraham thought to have left behind forever. On his arrival the first thing he saw was a well in a field and three flocks of sheep lying close by. Jacob inquired of the shepherds who they were, and they said that they, meaning themselves, were of Laban's household, and that these were Laban's sheep, that his daughter Rachel was coming yonder with another flock. Jacob, realizing that the strong should wait upon the weak, rolled the stone away from the well and watered the sheep of Rachel; he then kissed her, and as he did so the long pent-up feeling of the exile gave way and he wept. He told Rachel his long story and why he had come to her father's house. Bethuel, the father of Rebekah, was dead, and Laban, her brother, was at the head of the



house. They received Jacob cordially, taking him to their home as a guest.

Almost instantly, when he met Rachel at the well, he felt the noblest of passions of the heart—regard for a good woman. That



VISION OF JACOB'S LADDER.

regard was no doubt strengthened by the occupation upon which he now entered—that of a shepherd in the employ of Laban. It may seem strange that Rachel, who was the daughter of an honored and wealthy man, should be driving sheep to water, but if we, to-day, were among the people of those far-off countries we should see the same thing among the better classes, for the daughters of the chiefs always care for the flocks. Every day, therefore, Jacob and Rachel met, and their friendship gradually ripened into love, which made his years of service as a day. He bound himself to Laban fourteen years as a com-

pensation for his daughter Rachel, who loved him in return. He remained six years longer, that he might acquire wealth of his own.

Laban was often a hard task-master, but Jacob was a true shepherd. He gave his life for his sheep. Whenever one was lost, Laban required Jacob to replace it, whether it died of old age or was stolen. His responsibility was so great that at last his nervous system became broken by anxiety. Ten times had Laban arbitrarily changed the wages and ten times did Jacob consent.

There was, however, another side to this bitter training. It



LEAH AND RACHEL.

taught Jacob economy, and year by year his wealth grew. He was shrewd and full of resource. He became imbued with the idea that the more patiently he labored the greater his wealth would increase.

Jacob had two natures; a lower and a higher, but the

lower one was gradually being supplanted by the higher. The twenty years of toil were only the preparation for a greater manhood.

His growing riches finally excited a feeling of resentment in Laban's mind and he turned his countenance from Jacob, thereby showing he would have little or nothing to do with him. Jacob now felt a rupture was inevitable, and he thought if it came, he would probably lose all that he had, for with Laban's position he could easily bring up some excuse for confiscating all his herds and flocks, and having a large number of retainers could enforce his will.

Jacob regretted this, for he still remembered that he was destined, according to his birthright, to be the head of a house far greater than Laban's. To remain in the east longer was to become merged more and more into Laban's family, so he concluded to make a change, to make one bold stroke for freedom and move away as swiftly as he could with his servants, cattle and flocks of sheep. He had camels also, and other beasts of burden. He sent his herds three days' march in advance, and calling his family together rehearsed everything, telling them that God had said: "Now arise, get thee out from this land and return unto the land of thy kindred." His wives, Leah and Rachel, said: "Whatsoever God commands, that do."

Jacob waited until one day when Laban went out to shear his sheep, then he placed his wives and children on camels and set out by night to Mount Gilead. He made all the haste he could, but even then Laban overtook him.

The persistent pursuit shows that Laban had no intention of letting Jacob go, and he would doubtless have taken everything Jacob possessed, had not God come to Laban in a dream, saying: "Take heed thou speak not to Jacob either good or bad." This was a restraining order, and he dared not disobey it. He then returned to his own tent, disappointed, having accomplished nothing, except to make a treaty with Jacob limiting the boundary of each.

The five tents of Jacob, with his family and the servants, his flocks, herds, and camels, and near by the tents, camels, and forces of Laban, restrained as he was by God, was a picture not soon to be forgotten. They each took the oath with a sacrificial feast not to cross from one boundary to another. The line was fixed by a heap of stones called Mizpah, which carries with it those words repeated by so many millions of people: "The Lord watch between thee and me while we are absent the one from the other."

The difference in the names by which the place is often called shows that the two tribes drifted apart. The dialects differed. The oath couples for the first and the last time the name of Abraham and Nahor.

In the morning Laban rose up early, blessed his children, with whom he had become reconciled, and after kissing them departed for his own home. There on the summit of the mountains, five thousand



feet above the sea, commanding a view east and west, north and south, Jacob was left alone with his people. He saw the waters of the Jabbok plunging toward Jordan, cutting the mountains like a twisted arrow of silver. He gazed on the deep valley of the Jordan, from which he had been absent twenty years. What a change has taken place in him! We feel instinctively that he was a new and a better man. It was not the old Jacob, but the new, with a nobler heart. A life of honor and greatness was beginning to write its marks on his face.

Standing there on the sentinel outpost of his country, he left exile behind and looked forward to the gateways of the future. His trials were not all of the past, but with the new there came also glory and power. He was beginning to be that man whom all the world loves and over whom the world shed its tears when he died. We now leave him on the mountain's summit, alone. As night drew on he entered the mist, to emerge again like one who has died and risen in a better land with a fixed and purified nature.



"LABAN HAD NO INTENTION OF LETTING JACOB GO."

## CHAPTER XII

### JACOB; OR THE PRINCE OF GOD

STANDING on a height where the rays of the declining sun strike the body of a traveler, he will notice, if observing, that a giant shadow falls on the opposite slope. He will notice, too, if he lifts his foot, that the shadow keeps motion with his body. One not accustomed to shadows will doubtless be surprised to find that the figure is a reproduction of himself.

In a manner similar to this had Jacob trod the pathway of life, his shadow appearing and disappearing as circumstances caused him to enter the valley or climb the mountain top. At this time, however, his exile and training of twenty years was at an end, and he stepped forth, not as a surprised and defeated man, but one who, having made an effort to conquer self, had succeeded.

When he went out of the gateway of Bethel from Canaan two decades before, we are told that he was met by angels who said that God would bless him on his journey. Here again they met him as he entered the land of his birth. During the twenty long years they had not appeared to him, but now they came to welcome him home with the same degree of warmth that they bade him farewell when departing.

He had often wondered what Esau would do in case he ever returned, and now that he had fully decided that it was best to return



MEETING OF ESAU AND JACOB.

he concluded to send him word and not take him by surprise. In the meantime, to his dismay, he learned that Esau, who had become a robber chief, located on the desert edge, was on his way to meet and overcome him with four hundred freebooters at his heels.

This array of force looked disheartening to Jacob, for it was hard to tell just how a man like Esau might act. It would seem, though, he was justified in preparing for the worst, even though the worst might never come. The first thing he did was to divide his force and then arrange munificent presents for Esau. He then waited till night had fallen, and entering the tents of his people aroused the sleepers and sent them forth in the dark that they might escape him whom twenty years before he had wronged. As for himself, God would teach him what to do.

At some appointed moment each man must meet the crisis of his life. Jacob met his now, and met it alone. A lifetime was centered in his meditation and decision.

All his people had gone. There was not a beast of burden, a lamb, a child, man, or woman with him. His straining eyes had watched them go down through the gorge and pass out of sight. He listened till the roar of the water drowned the echo of the receding footsteps. Then he knew his hour was at hand—an hour for victory or defeat.

It is not necessary to think that the situation demanded the presence of an angel, though he did come afterwards, for on such an occasion each soul goes by itself down into the valley of sorrow to meet its Maker.

Jacob had already prayed to God. He began to feel his unworthiness and weakness in not giving God praise for the blessings which had been given him. He had, previous to this, relied upon his own resources for success, and hence took the glory as his own. Now the tables were turned. He saw no other way but to throw himself absolutely upon God for deliverance! Doubtless for this reason, and this only, he was brought to this crisis. He now humbled himself and asked that God's will, not his, be done.

In this silence he remained until the inner voice said: "Let me go, for the day breaketh." Jacob replied: "I will not let thee go except Thou bless me." That was enough. His moment of victory was at



hand. He cared henceforth not for material prosperity, but for spiritual blessings.

The angel said : "What is thy name?" He asked that simply to draw out the fact that *men*, not *man*, was his whole concern. This is proven by the words of the angel when he says : "Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel, for as a prince hast thou power with God and with man and hast prevailed." How many like Jacob have



THE VILLAGE OF BETHEL.

gone into the silence with God and conquered self ! It is like going on the field of battle without a name and coming back famous. Jacob went down into the silence a sinful man, he came back a prince.

Now that he had conquered self he was ready to meet Esau. He needed no soldiers, for with brotherly love and sympathy in his heart it was easy to settle all difficulties. The result was, when they met, they both wept. Jacob spoke to Esau as if he were a superior, calling him "My Lord," and insisting that Esau should accept his munificent gift. Esau, who had grown wealthy, declined, but Jacob persisted, saying that he had seen Esau's face as if it were God's face. In that night of wrestling with self, no one except those who have been in the silence with

God, can tell how self vanishes away. Esau now appeared to Jacob as he appeared in boyhood—innocent, penitent, and kindly. The face that he dreaded to meet came a sweet, suffering face, and he longed to do right and undo whatever wrong he had done in the past. They met as enemies—they parted in peace, Esau going down into Mt. Seir, where his tribe grew into a nation, Jacob journeying on to overtake his people.

Let us now stop to notice some of the changes that have taken place in Canaan. When Abraham first passed through Shechem it was a fertile but unoccupied valley. Now the people were everywhere cultivating the soil, and the inhabitants could boast of a good-sized town. Some of the sojourners were herdsmen, others agriculturists. Jacob was the first to combine an agricultural life with a pastoral one. He purchased land and built a house and constructed booths for his cattle.

In this purchase of Jacob's we have the first account of a coin. In Abraham's day, you will remember, silver was weighed—now appears the coin, bearing the simple form of a lamb to designate its value. The greater the number of lambs the greater the value. Scripture says: "For an hundred lambs of money."

God now commanded Jacob to go to Bethel, the place where he had dreamed his dream, and there erect an altar, and offer sacrifice. To prepare for this event Jacob took the idols from all those who were in his camp, as well as rings, bracelets, and all ornaments of any nature whatsoever, and buried them, thus signifying the burying of the false and holding fast to the truth. Soon after this

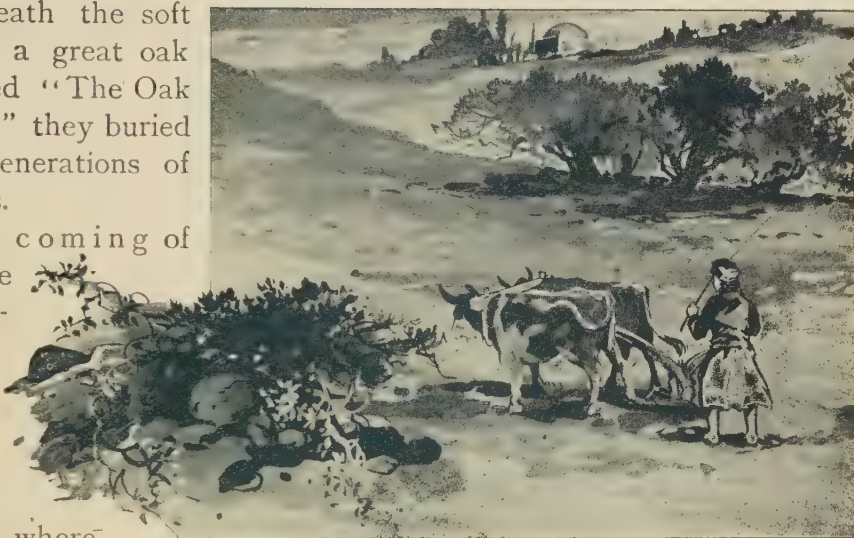


A FOUNTAIN IN THE SHECHEM VALLEY.

the whole tribe went up to the altar at Bethel in new garments and clean hearts. In the sacredness of this. God renewed his covenant with Jacob.

While the family were gathered "at the house of God," Deborah, the mother's old nurse, came up to visit them. She was received and entertained with great care and solicitude—a royal guest could not have received greater attention. While there she was taken ill, and they looked upon it as a great favor to be able to close her eyes in death. Their love is measured by their sorrow. When they buried her, which was beneath the soft shade of a great oak tree called "The Oak of Tears," they buried several generations of memories.

The coming of this nurse from Hebron may have persuaded the tribe to go to Hebron, where the aged father,



A FIELD IN PALESTINE.

Isaac, was living. Whether this was the case or not, soon after this they journeyed down the pleasant valleys until they came in sight of Bethlehem. Here they halted, for beloved Rachel, the soul of the tribe, was taken ill. She regretted to die—she had so much to live for. Her sorrow became a legend to the people generations after, and we find it summed up in the words, "Rachel wept for her children." Looking upon the infant babe lying on her bosom, whom she named Benoni, "The Son of Sorrow," and whom Jacob named Ben-Yamin, "The Son of My Right Hand," she felt she could not go, and in her death came Jacob's greatest sorrow. Here they buried her. Then they journeyed on to Hebron, where they buried Isaac a little later on. These three deaths—Deborah, Rachel, and Isaac—touched Jacob deeply. He loved with a depth which could not be measured, and his grief was in proportion. These losses affected him more deeply than all his gains had ever done.



Here Esau and Jacob met again. Esau came with his band and partook for a season of the peaceful life of his brother's home. It was a great contrast to his mode of living, and who knows but the brief visit instilled into his longing heart a desire for something more—something better?

In the death of Isaac a new head was formally installed. Jacob, "The Hero of God," by virtue of character became the willing choice of all the tribe. On the slopes of Hebron the tribes of Esau and Jacob ratified the headship of Jacob over the ancestral estate.

But Jacob's troubles did not end here. In one sense they only began. His great love for Joseph led him to indiscretion, and among other things to clothe him with exceptional beauty of garments. The open display of unusual affection, coupled with dreams, induced hate among the sons against Joseph, and at an opportune time they sold him to a caravan.

Jacob grew old under that sorrow. His hair turned white, his face aged with furrows, and his shoulders, which nothing seemed to bend, stooped lower and lower. The brothers, when they saw his suffering, softly said, as he lifted a slower foot: "Jacob grows older." Then it was that little Benjamin became his very breath of life. No one envied that. Envy and hatred, having spent their fury, saw all things differently.

But there was no mending such a break of bone. Only when the sons came up from the second journey into Egypt with corn for the household, bringing back the marvelous story that Joseph was the ruler over Egypt, did he become himself.

Jacob could not believe. Only when they led him out to look on wagons, camels, horses, servants, garments and necessary provision, did he believe that Joseph was yet alive.

Language is too feeble to describe their meeting. No ear heard their sayings, yet we are told they wept in each other's arms. Jacob then went into the king's presence. The greatest man of God bowed before earth's strongest potentate. It was a simple but great scene.

"And Pharaoh said unto Jacob, How old art thou? And Jacob said unto Pharaoh: The days of the years of my pilgrimage are an hundred and thirty years; few and evil have the days of the years of my life been, and have not attained unto the days of the life of my

fathers in the days of their pilgrimage. And Jacob blessed Pharaoh and went out from before Pharaoh."

How many were in that meeting we do not know. We know, though, that there were three—Jacob, Joseph and Pharaoh—and that the greatest of these was Jacob.

From the days that Jacob played by the wells of Beersheba on the desert's edge, to the night at Bethel, when he saw the angels ascending and descending, we do not have any knowledge that his thoughts were ever of heaven. Ever after, from the time his feet first touched the lowest round of a ladder whereon walked angels, did he make his way in accordance with God's wishes and found it sweet. Let man walk the angels' path and eventually they must come to kings' thrones, even as this shepherd came.

Jacob was no longer an uneducated man living in tents—he was schooled by nature, he walked with rulers, with angels, with God. His nature, ever simple, could not love Egypt, even though Joseph was her king. Its pomp and display could not lure him from his birth-right. He preferred Canaan—that was his land. So the old man, over and over, like a little child, said: "Bury me not in Egypt. See that thou carry me back to Canaan. Bury me with my people at Hebron."

God told him before he started to Egypt that Joseph would close his eyes. So he did, and in sacred keeping with his will they carried him back to Canaan.



RACHEL'S TOMB

His funeral was one of ostentation. It required scores upon scores of horses, camels and chariots to carry the hundreds of people who went up with the embalmed body. The whole valley sounded with lamentations, for a mighty chieftain had died. They buried him in the cave of Machpelah, where Abraham and Sarah, Isaac and Rebekah, all slept. He had been mightier than princes and his name was Jacob—The Prince and Hero of God.





## CHAPTER XIII

### JOSEPH; OR THE STOLEN BOY SOLD INTO SLAVERY

THE life of Joseph, the son of Jacob and Rachel, is more wonderful in many ways than any of the other early heroes of the Bible.

Joseph was born near the city of Nahor during the time that his father was exiled from the land of Canaan.

In the various surroundings that encompassed his early life there were many opportunities which a bright boy could take advantage of.

He saw first the poetic eastern land, afterwards the promised land of Canaan, and later Egypt, the greatest civilized section of the world. Jacob's home, at the time of Joseph's birth in the city of Nahor, was the center of an agricultural district and quite different from that found in Canaan twenty years later.

In the east he heard from travelers of the great and famous cities of Babylon, Nineveh, Calneh and Ur. Even though he might never see them, the stories filled his mind with wonder and admiration.

Joseph was but a boy when his father fled from Nahor, yet he was old enough to be an interested spectator at the coming of Laban's troops,



JOSEPH'S DREAM.

and wonder what would be the outcome. With a boy's enthusiasm, he doubtless wanted to travel faster, but knew if they did that it would bring death to the flocks, herds and loaded camels.

Then again, later on in the trip, Joseph doubtless shared with the camp the anxiety felt over the news that Esau was coming with four hundred freebooters at his heels. We venture to say, though, that the prospect of meeting Esau's soldiers fed his mind more with glory than with fear, for he had been told of God's promise to protect his father, and he knew enough of God to feel with a boy's confidence that he could rely upon the promise. The angel ministry had come early into Joseph's life, keeping him pure from the idolatry of his grandfather and the partial idolatry of his mother. The danger, the changing scenes, the picturesqueness of the route, all must have lent a charm and interest to an impressionable nature such as Joseph's to a degree which cannot be calculated. He moved in open-eyed wonder amid the varying scenes of Canaan. It was here that he first saw Isaac, his grandfather, as well as the old family nurse, Deborah. No doubt he went up to the old family burial place at Hebron when Isaac was laid to rest. It was here, too, that he lost his mother—that good woman who so hated to die and leave the family whom she had watched and loved.

All the sons were now grown to men except Benjamin and Joseph. The latter was quite a boy, while Benjamin was only an infant. Joseph differed quite materially from his ten elder brethren. He was of a higher nature, and said to be the best of all the children.

Two of the brothers managed the father's business and looked after the flocks and herds. Joseph had a portion of the work assigned him under their care. With his quick perception he noticed that they mismanaged rather than managed his father's business, and he no doubt expressed his disapproval, which naturally had a tendency to make him unpopular with them. This, together with the fact that their father loved him best, led them more and more to dislike him. Jacob's affection was especially marked by a rich coat which he gave to Joseph. The ordinary garment in those days reached only to the knees; this coat came down to the ankles and was "of many colors." These incidents, with others occurring now and then, tended to form a spirit of envy toward Joseph, which in time foreboded sorrow to all the family.

God, however, overruled all for good. When Jacob came into the

land of Canaan, after his return from exile, he purchased land near the city of Shechem. In the field of Shechem the drama of Joseph's life was unfolded. He dreamed a dream of that field, which ran as follows: He thought he was there with his brothers, and that they were all following the reapers, binding the grain which had been cut, when suddenly his sheaf stood upright and the other sheaves stood around bowing to his sheaf. Joseph thought this a strange dream, and told it to his brothers, and they hated him all the more, and said: "We suppose that you mean that we shall bow down to you."

Soon after Joseph had another strange dream. He thought he saw the sun, moon, and eleven stars in the sky, and that they bowed down to him. This dream was more strange than the other, and he told it to his father as well as his brothers.

His father was surprised, and said: "Does the sun mean me, and the moon your mother, and the stars your brothers; and shall we bow down to you?"

Yet Jacob thought that God had sent the dream to Joseph, and would make it come true; but the brothers were more and more angry. One day his father sent him to this very field, beyond which were the pasture lands where the brothers were feeding the flocks. Jacob desired to know how they were getting along. When Joseph arrived he found they had moved to a place called Dothan, where there were two wells.



DREAM OF THE SUN, MOON AND STARS.



Here he followed them. At a distance the brothers saw him coming, and they said one to another: "Here comes the dreamer; let us kill him and throw him into a deep pit; then we shall see what will come of his dreams." So when he came they seized hold of him and stripped off his beautiful coat. They were on the point of killing him, when one of the brothers, named Reuben, dissuaded them from their plans, saying: "Let us put him in some pit in the wilderness." Reuben was a little kinder than the rest. He said this in order to devise some plan to rescue Joseph from their hands later on. It was finally agreed that he should be lowered into a dry well. These wells were shaped like bottles, and it was impossible for one to climb out of them. They were occasionally used as prisons.

Reuben hoped to save him, but one day while he was absent, as the brothers were eating their dinners, they lifted up their eyes and saw a caravan of Ishmaelites coming down from Gilead, on their way to Egypt with spices, balm, and myrrh. Judah, another brother, who felt that it was a horrible death to die by thirst, starvation, and exposure in the dry well, suggested that they sell Joseph to these Arab merchants, for, he said, "He is our brother; let us not have his blood on our hands."

These merchants always stood ready to purchase slaves. They are even to this day the great slave masters of the world. Joseph was a Syrian. The Syrian slave brought the highest price in the market. Since Joseph was young—seventeen years of age—good looking also, and his brothers being eager to get rid of him, the transaction was easily arranged. Having disposed of Joseph, the brothers decided they must meet their father with a story which would end the matter and preclude all search or inquiry after him; so they slew a kid, dipped Joseph's garments in the blood and took them to Jacob. When he saw them he was stricken with grief and greatly sorrowed over the boy, who, he thought, had met a tragic death. The deed was done, but the years intervening between the day of the brothers' crime and the day that they met Joseph again were years of trial—even the rustling of a leaf startled them. They daily saw their father grow older and grayer under this sorrow, but knowing it was the effect of their work they did not know how to remedy it.

Every mishap that came into their lives they laid at their own door,

believing that they had done this wrong, not only to their brother, but to their father also. The tears of Joseph and his pleadings were things they could not forget.

The punishment of their wrong-doing had a tendency to bring them to their better selves. To offset their lack of love for Joseph, they tried to be unusually good to the boy who was left, and thus Benjamin became the center of all their affection.

Let us now follow Joseph into the land of Egypt. You remember that the Arabs who purchased him were going to Egypt with spices.



JOSEPH SOLD INTO EGYPT.

In those days an enormous trade of this kind was carried on. The spices were used for incense on the altars, for embalming the dead, and for disinfectants in the homes.

When the Arabs reached Egypt they sold Joseph to Potiphar, an officer in the army, for twenty pieces of silver. Potiphar ranked high socially and owned an elegant home in the city of Memphis. In each district, once a year, the freemen as well as the slaves were compelled to register their names, addresses, and to give their occupation. If they were slaves, the name, address and rank of their master had also

to be given. This department required a supreme head. The officer occupying the position was called "The two eyes of the king of Upper Egypt and the two ears of the king of Lower Egypt." This, no doubt, was the office and title of Potiphar. Joseph became the slave of this eminent officer.

He tried to be a good servant. Though he wished to be with his father, he did not waste his time fretting, but took great pains to please Potiphar. When his master told him to do anything, he always endeavored to please him. It was God who made Joseph able to do his work well ; and Potiphar knew that it was God. I suppose Joseph had told him, for he had not known the true God heretofore, but worshiped idols.

Potiphar liked Joseph better every day. At last he said to him, "I can trust you so well that I will give you the charge of the other servants when I am out. Take care of the house, and all the things in it, of the garden and of the fields ; for I can trust you."

In an establishment like Potiphar's the responsibilities of the head slave are many. In addition to the town residence there was a country home. The-out-of town place had a farm, cattle, flock, herds, and many servants. All the slaves, their work and needs, were in the hands of Joseph, and he proved himself so excellent a governor that the Bible says: "Potiphar concerned himself about nothing." Moreover the house of Potiphar was blessed for Joseph's sake. "And the blessing of the Lord was upon all that he had in the house and in the field." This was a high position.

Now Potiphar had a very wicked wife. She wished Joseph turned out of the house; for he had found out how bad she was, and she did not like to have him about.

The wicked woman said to Potiphar: "Your slave, that you think so good, is wicked, and when you are out he behaves very ill."

Potiphar was so foolish as to believe her, and he said: "Joseph shall be put in prison."

There were a great many men in the prison, and most of them had done very bad things, but Joseph had done nothing wrong. God still loved him, and He could make him happy even in a prison. This prison was surrounded by a wall which was called the "White Castle."



Joseph, though in prison, was still Potiphar's superior slave, and hence was consigned to an officer who specially cared for high prisoners. Joseph won the regard of the officer by his good conduct, and after a time was placed in charge of the other prisoners—all distinguished men. Among the prisoners were two who had previously held offices. One was the king's "cup-bearer;" the other, "the chief baker." These two men came very near the king's life. The "cup-bearer," or chief butler, tasted everything before the king drank it, to show that it was wholesome and did not contain poison. He had charge of the wines and other things which the king drank. The Egyptians were not only fond of various drinks, but were prodigious eaters of cakes, sweetmeats and confections; hence, the "chief baker" was of high rank also, having under him a small army of cooks, servers and servants. As the "cup-bearer" guarded the wines of the king, so the "chief baker" guarded the food his majesty ate. These two noblemen had for some offense been cast into prison.

While Joseph was governor of Potiphar's slaves he came into



contact with these two men. Here he met them again. One morning, observing they were very sad, he asked the reason of it. They answered that they had each dreamed a dream which affected them most seriously.

Joseph then said, "Wherefore look ye so sadly to-day?" But they said unto him, "We have dreamed a dream and there is no interpreter of it." And Joseph said unto them, "Do not interpretations belong to God? Tell me then, I pray you."

The chief butler began first. He said, "I saw a vine; it had three branches, which budded, blossomed and brought forth ripe grapes. Pharaoh's cup was in my hand; and I took the grapes and pressed them into Pharaoh's cup, and I gave the cup into Pharaoh's hand." Joseph said, "This is the interpretation. The three branches mean three days. In that time you shall be restored to favor."

This was joyful news to the man who had related the dream. When the *baker* saw that the meaning was good he hastened to tell his dream, saying: "I had three white baskets on my head; and in the uppermost basket was all manner of baked meats for Pharaoh, and the birds did eat them out of the basket upon my head." Joseph said, "The three baskets are three days. That the birds did eat out of the baskets means that Pharaoh shall take off thy head, put it on a pole and the birds of the air shall eat thy flesh."

The interpretation proved correct, for in three days Pharaoh's birthday came. There were illuminations, feasts, rejoicings and processions. The king signalized it also by freeing certain prisoners and slaying others. The cup-bearer was restored to honor, and the chief baker died as was predicted. When Joseph told the cup-bearer the happy outcome of the dream, he said to him: "Think on me when it shall be well with thee, and shew kindness, I pray thee, unto me and make mention of me unto Pharaoh and bring me out of this house; for indeed I was stolen away out of the hands of the Hebrews, and here also have I done nothing that they should put me in prison."

We are sorry to say that when the cup-bearer got back into the sunshine of royal favor he did not remember Joseph who gave him three days of joy by foretelling his dream. Two full years of suffering passed before Joseph was released, but when it came he passed quickly from the prison house to a palace and a throne.

## CHAPTER XIV

### JOSEPH; OR A KING'S DREAM AND WHAT CAME OF IT

WHEN the fortunes of Joseph began to change, they changed so rapidly as to almost bewilder one. These things, though, are common in countries where impulsive kings, vested with unlimited power, reign. A man may be a slave to-day and a ruler to-morrow simply by the decree of an unprincipled ruler who thinks and does as he pleases. This is illustrated by the story which follows:

You remember when Joseph told the meaning of the dreams of the two noblemen who were in prison he asked the cup-bearer to think of him and to speak kindly of him to the king, but, ungrateful like, he forgot all about him.

"And it came to pass at the end of two full years, that Pharaoh dreamed; and behold, he stood by the river." He thought seven fat cows came out of the river and began to eat the grass in a meadow close by. This was a pleasant sight; but, soon after, he saw seven very thin cows come out of the river, and they ate up the seven fat cows; and yet, after they had eaten them, they looked as thin as they did before. Then the king awoke.

When Pharaoh related his dream the second time, he said of the thin cattle: "Such as I had never seen in all the land of Egypt for badness."

In the time of Pharaoh it was an everyday picture to the Egyptian to see the cow or river buffalo come out of the river and eat the grass at the edge of the stream. The



AN EARLY ASTROLOGER.



Nile is called "the river." It was *the* only river to them, ~~the~~ river of all the world.

But soon Pharaoh fell asleep, and dreamed that he saw a stalk of corn with seven fine ears growing on it. While he was looking he saw another stalk with seven very bad ears of corn on it; and these bad ears ate up the seven good ears.

The Egyptians called the wheat corn. This wheat was a variety which has seven beards on a stalk. It is still grown in the Delta of the Nile. In the old days this wheat or corn formed the chief food of Egypt and any injury to the crop was a serious matter. From the great desert to the west there sometimes blew a hot wind called the Khamsin, which withered the wheat and killed vegetation as it swept over the land. In this way the "blasted" beards of wheat could eat up the strong and good wheat, as the Egyptians well knew.

These were Pharaoh's two dreams. He thought them strange, and desired to know their meaning. If this had been an ordinary dream it would have passed out of his mind. But as it was a matter which related to the land of Egypt most seriously, and covered the space of fourteen years, it made a deep impression. He could not get the dream out of his thoughts.

In Egypt there were a number of colleges. In these were stationed wise men who made it a practice to study mystical thought. On occasions when the ruler needed the advice of magicians he sent for them. These wise men were now called in. They consulted sacred writings, performed certain magical rites in order to obtain the meaning of the dreams. They failed, however, and great excitement prevailed in the palace of the king.

At last, when all the great scholars had failed to solve the meaning of the dreams, the "cup-bearer" thought of Joseph. He then told Pharaoh of this Hebrew, meaning Joseph, and how he had told the meaning of *his* dream and also that of his companion, and that they had turned out just as he had said they would. When Pharaoh heard this he sent for Joseph immediately.

Before Joseph could come into the king's presence he had to be shaved from head to foot. Interpreting a dream was the work of a

priest. Every priest was compelled to shave, to wash often and put on clean clothes. This was the highest order of nobility. So Joseph was called to the rank of a nobleman. The hair, which appears on Egyptian tablets of priests and kings, is false hair. Only during mourning for the dead could an Egyptian of high rank wear a beard or allow his hair to



JOSEPH INTERPRETING PHARAOH'S DREAMS.

grow. Foreigners and people of poor and doubtful reputation were the only ones who could.

When Joseph was shaved, washed, and in clean apparel, he came before the king as a priest and a nobleman. It was a trying position to appear in the great court room, surrounded by all the scholars of the kingdom, and still more trying to appear before the king sitting upon the throne. Yet he was calm, for he knew that God intended to make a great man of him—a great man in order to do great good.

Pharaoh then said to Joseph, "I have had two strange dreams. There is not one of my wise men who can tell me their meaning. I would like to know, for I am greatly troubled."

"It is not myself," said Joseph, "that can tell the meaning, but my God can." The king then told his dream without delay.

Joseph said to Pharaoh: "The two dreams relate to one event. The dream was repeated because the thing which it signified was intended to be made emphatic. The dream," he said, "has come to you, King Pharaoh, because God wishes to tell you what is about to happen to the land of Egypt.

"There will be seven years of great plenty. Then there will be seven years of famine, so great that the seven plenteous years will be forgotten." Then Joseph gave the king some advice: "Seek out a discreet man, with authority to employ other men, and let a fifth part of all the crops of the seven plenteous years be gathered into store-houses. These stores of grain will keep the people from starving during the seven years of famine."

This advice looked reasonable and it pleased the king as well as it did the wise men. Pharaoh turned to them and said, "Can we find such a man as *this*, in whom the Spirit of God is?" There was silence in the assembly, for they knew of none great enough for this work. In this silence the king turned to Joseph, saying: "Forasmuch as God hath shewed thee all this, there is none so discreet and wise as thou art;" then Pharaoh placed Joseph over the king's house, saying: "My people in the land of Egypt shall be ruled by thy word. I will be greater than thou only in the throne." He then took the signet ring from his hand, and placed it on Joseph's, saying: "By this means every door will be opened to you." They then clothed Joseph in fine linen and Pharaoh placed a chain of gold upon his neck. The king gave him a new name—Zaphnath Paaneah—"the preserver of life." So by kingly decree Joseph rode in a chariot and a servant went before the chariot, crying: "Bow the knee." He had risen in a moment of time to be the second greatest man of the kingdom.

The linen he wore marked his advent to the highest order of the priesthood. The golden chain was the sign of authority; the signet ring made him king over the palace and over the nation. He rode in the second royal chariot. The only honor which Pharaoh reserved exclusively for himself was that of sitting on the throne. Here, only, was he greater than Joseph, Joseph had an Egyptian name given him, and in time he married the daughter of a priest. In dress, name, mar-



riage, conversation, office and rank he appeared as none other than an Egyptian.

This was a singular elevation for a slave, but it was no more than was foretold in his boyhood dream. Tell me what a boy dreams, a girl dreams, a man or a woman dreams, and I will tell you pretty closely what that person's thoughts are.

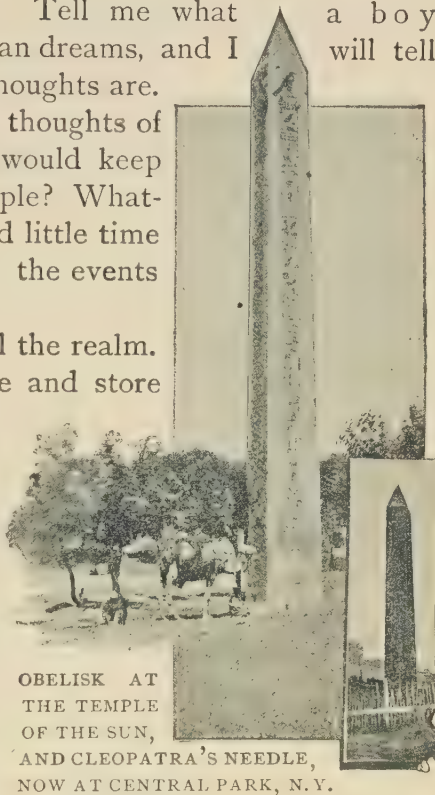
In all these years what were the thoughts of Joseph? Did he have faith that God would keep his promise and lead him to help his people? Whatever his thoughts *had* been, he now had little time to dream or to think of anything except the events surrounding his work and duties.

He became the busiest man in all the realm. He furnished extra revenue to purchase and store away grain for the people and food for the cattle. He built granaries at various places large enough to store all the material accumulated during the seven years of plenty. The granaries he had built in places convenient to certain centers where people could come and buy. One by one these great store-houses arose over the land. Armies of men to build, armies to collect the grain, armies to store it, were called

into service. Joseph had the managing of all this. It was left to him to save a nation's life. We now leave him for awhile, but in the meantime we will remember that he was the busiest man in the whole land of Egypt. His home was located at On, the most noted city of the world at that time.

Men weighted with care as was Joseph found rest in the quiet of this city. Here did he meet the great men of all lands, including those of his adopted country. His wife's father was the superintendent of the college. This, with his own exalted rank, brought him into contact with the educated class and gave him a magnificent opportunity for study.

On was a walled city standing at the edge of ground known as the



"cultivated" ground. To-day this city and wall is a ruin, almost a heap of dust. Gardens now occupy the spot where once stood "the temple of the sun," a place of interest to all the world. The importance of the worship carried on here was shown by names which priest and king bore—Pharaoh was known as "the child of the sun;" Potiphar as "the servant of the sun."

In this town was an avenue known as the avenue of Sphinxes. This led to a great gateway, over which flew red and blue streamers fastened to enormously high flagstaffs.

In front of the gateway and behind it, two by two stood "the colossal petrification of the sunbeams," called obelisks. Of these there is still one remaining. It, alone, stands as a sentinel of all its past grandeur. One of the "obelisks" was presented to the United States and is located in Central Park, New York City.

Near the temple was a spring. A spring in Egypt is a rare thing. This was said to be the reason why this spot was chosen for the building of this famous temple and city. This spring was named, "The sacred spring of the sun," and is still there, but clogged by the water plants which spring up luxuriantly over its surface.

When Strabo, an early historian, wrote about the city, only a few priests and temple servants were there. They *remained* to sustain the temple worship and to show strangers through the deserted cloisters and over the silent quadrangles where once crowds of students walked, and where professor, priest and king came to study, to write, and to worship.

The desire in this description is to show you the beauty of the city where Joseph came to live. It had this temple, schools, mansions, gardens, great men, beautiful women, fine avenues on every hand. Here amidst this beauty dwelt the man who knew what slavery, prison and power meant. What a rest and relief to him!



VIEW OF ISLAND OF PHILAE AND THE RIVER NILE.

## CHAPTER XV

### JOSEPH; OR TEN HONEST MEN ARRESTED AS SPIES

JOSEPH all this time was very busy, and like all hard-working, busy men, did not, at first, take time for pleasure. In the center of each rural district under Joseph's dominion was a town, village, or city. He built in each of these centers a store-house, and sometimes a number of store-houses, according to the number of people in the community. These store-houses received all the grain of the fields not needed by the people, and in that way a good supply was always on hand. At first he kept an account of all that was stored, but after a time this was given up, for the seven plenteous years of which we read gave such abundant crops that it seemed useless to keep a report of all that was stored. The Bible says the earth brought forth by handfuls. Joseph made such good calculation that he was able to supply not only the land of Egypt, but other lands also. We can see from this how busy he was, and what elaborate preparation he was making for a "rainy day,"—no, for days when it never rained.

During all these years Joseph had sent *no* word home. Many boys and girls have doubtless wondered why he didn't write and tell his father where he was and inquire how he and Benjamin were getting along. We learn from one brief verse, and that only, that he had been homesick. I am inclined to think that he almost died of homesickness; people do die of this affliction. Physicians call it nostalgia; but I call it heart-break and homesickness.





THE BUILDING OF STORE-  
HOUSES.

This homesickness comes to light in the names he gave his sons. He called the older son, Manasseh, which means "forgetting," and gives as reason for calling him that: "For the Lord hath made me forget my father's house."

Now that he had prospered and had gotten a system of govern-

ment well arranged, he decided to lay aside a little of his worry and enjoy life with his family and friends. Yet he longed for a word from the old home.

Joseph was seventeen years old when his brothers sold him into slavery and thirty when Pharaoh made him ruler over Egypt. He had passed thirteen long years as a slave and a prisoner. In those years he had longed many a time for a sight of his father, his brothers and his home. Did he not long for them now? Yes. But God made him contented in the land of Egypt. He had a home of his own, a loving wife and two beautiful sons. He called the younger, Ephraim, which signifies "fruitful." This had reference to his success and achievements in the land of Egypt, where once he had been a slave.

You have often seen trees, which, though torn up from their roots in a reckless way and transplanted to another place, do well. If the roots are watered and nourished, they will live and thrive in spite of all

the great shocks they get. When they droop, we know they are homesick, sick at heart, but when new leaves spring forth and they flourish, we say the change is good. Joseph's life was much like a tree. It rested with God. He had been fed, watered and nourished—scantily at first, perhaps, but nature weighed him in the balance and he was not found wanting. God advised Joseph not to write home. The brothers needed to suffer—they needed the discipline. God knew it, and He never makes mistakes.

The years passed away rapidly, as all prosperous years do—seven golden, fruitful years. Then came a change. The soil became dry and hard—no grass appeared. The effects of the famine began to be felt. In Egypt the river Nile, which usually overflowed, carrying moisture and richness to the adjacent lands, was very low and muddy. It was the lack of water in this river that caused the famine. It required twenty-six feet in the channel of the river before an overflow was possible. If it did not rise high enough, drought resulted. As Joseph had predicted, there were seven successive years of low river,—no overflow of the land, consequently no crops.

To-day, it takes about thirty-two feet of water in the channel to cause an overflow. The difference in depth comes from the fact that the Nile, having placed deposits of soil on the land year after year, has caused the banks of the river, as a result, to rise in height. The people in Egypt now guard against drought by what they call “bar-rage.” We call it a dam. This dam is built across the stream and prevents the water from flowing away except a little at a time. It then begins to rise and can be made to reach a certain



THE NILE, AND GENERAL VIEW OF TEMPLE AT LUXOR.

level. In so doing a sufficient height can be reached to enable people to pump it from the river and run it into irrigating ditches. The ditches have gates which, when opened, permit the water to flow by small sluices over the land.

The British government, which now controls Egypt, has greatly extended this irrigation system, and is now preparing a great lake in which the surplus waters of the Nile can be stored. It is spending millions to preserve every drop of water which can be saved. You will remember that recently the British government was willing to go to war rather than let one foot of the Nile, or one inch of its tributaries, pass into the hands of another nation. England did this, lest the waters feeding the Nile should be diverted by an enemy and reduce the people to a famine. The Nile is the making of Egypt. It is the life of the land. The Nilometer, an instrument used by the government to show the height of the river, is talked about as we talk about the thermometer. The people in Egypt say, "How is the Nile? and what is the reading to-day?" That is, what did the Nilometer register?

Writers have given us accounts of famines in that land, when the dead have lain so thick as to look as though they had fallen in battle.

At the time of Joseph, Egypt was not the only place where the scarcity of food was felt. Rain had fallen scantily in lands adjacent to Egypt. It even affected Canaan, Joseph's old home. Other countries suffered most, for they had not been previously warned and had no supply of grain on hand to nourish their inhabitants. They heard that there was grain in Egypt. "And all countries came into Egypt to Joseph for to buy corn, because the famine was so sore in all lands."

The caravans which frequently passed by Jacob's home had undoubtedly been carrying grain up into Canaan, for the record is: "Now when Jacob saw that there was corn in Egypt, Jacob said unto his sons, Why do ye look one upon another? Behold, I have heard that there is corn in Egypt: get ye down thither, and buy for us, that we may live and not die."

"And Joseph's ten brethren went down to buy corn in Egypt." Jacob would not permit Benjamin to go, for he feared something might happen to him. Since the supposed death of Joseph, Jacob had watched Benjamin with great care.



Ere long the brothers, with others, came to buy corn in Egypt. While awaiting their turn, Joseph recognized them, but *they* did not recognize him. When they bowed before him as king, calling him "my lord," he recalled the old wheat field in Canaan, just outside the city of Shechem. He recalled also his dream about being in the harvest field binding sheaves after the reapers, when his sheaf stood up and the sheaves of his brothers bowed to his sheaf. That was over twenty years ago. They were now bending before him, asking the privilege of buying corn. What emotion filled his breast!

The brothers could not speak the Egyptian language, so they were obliged to speak to an interpreter, one who knew both the language of Canaan and that of Egypt. When Joseph conferred with them, he addressed his words to an interpreter, who in turn translated the meaning to the brothers. In this way Joseph appeared to be a stranger to their tongue, though he knew, of course, every word they were speaking.

The thing Joseph most desired to find out was whether the father was well, and how Benjamin, his brother, was; but he knew he must do so in



A CARAVAN OUTSIDE OF THE GATES.

a manner that would not excite their suspicion. There was no way to do this, except to draw out their family history. He felt he could do this best by resorting to policy, so he accused them of being spies, and said, "he questioned whether they came down to buy corn or to determine if his country was well fortified." They immediately began to tell all about themselves, about their father, and their children. Bit by bit they told their whole family history. They did it clearly, honestly, concisely. They told of the land and its distress and famine, of a younger brother who was at home with the father and whom the father would not permit to come with them, for he feared some evil might befall him. "They had at one time one other brother," they said, "but he was dead."

Joseph appeared not to be moved by their words. He said again, "I fear you are spies, but I will give you an opportunity to prove your innocence. I will make this proposition: 'Send *one* of your number back home; let *him* bring the younger brother here; then will I know that you are not spies. The remainder will I keep here till your brother is brought.'"

He then put them all in a place of safe keeping for three days while they thought it over. Three days seemed a long time, but after their long, hard journey, Joseph knew three days of rest would not hurt them, but, on the contrary, do them great good.

On the third day Joseph went to them, saying *he* had changed his plans: that he had decided to keep only *one* of them, and that the others might go back home, taking corn for the family. He said if they were honest men, they would show their good intentions by cheerfully accepting his last proposition. He then waited a few moments for their reply. In the meantime the brothers, thinking that Joseph did not understand them, began to talk over their sin committed twenty years before.

It is not the noblest thing to say to others: "Did I not ask you to refrain from doing what you did?" But Reuben at this time could not help it. The sorrow of his father, the distress happening to them now, the grief that this would bring to the home, brought back his own anguish when twenty years before he pleaded with them not to kill Joseph. These are the words in part: "Do not sin against the child." True, they had put him in a well as he had suggested, but later on,

when he was absent, they sold him to some Arab merchants who were passing.

The truthful words of Reuben were so pathetic that they with other things broke Joseph down, and he turned and went away from their presence weeping. After recovering his calm he went back and talked awhile with them, then taking Simeon, who was, no doubt, the ringleader in the old crime, he bound him before their eyes and



‘JOSEPH KNEW HIS BRETHREN.’

made him prisoner. These brothers were passing through a sore trial, yet it made them more worthy of the blessings which were soon to follow.

So the nine brothers made ready to start for home, but before leaving, Joseph said to his servants: “When you fill these men’s sacks with corn put back into their sacks the *money that they paid me*, and give them also some food by the way.”

So they went—the nine men—a sad but a picturesque party, with corn from the land of Egypt, back to their old home. They were sorrowful, and do you wonder? This was the second time they had gone back to Jacob with one of their number missing. The old, old



days, so long gone by, kept coming back, ever reminding them of their sin and Jacob's grief.

"They had not seen Pharaoh," they said, "but one who was like him." By this, they meant that they had seen one who, by his severity, cast an awe on every one. The Scripture itself seems to illustrate Pharaoh's dignity, for in his dream, when he went out to look upon the sacred river at sunrise, he, this priest and king, saw both the good and the evil coming to the nation. God seems to have laid all the secrets of life before him. Joseph even said: "What God is about to do he sheweth unto Pharaoh." The oath that was the highest in court was: "I swear by the life of Pharaoh."

These brothers had not yet come into contact with Pharaoh, but they had talked with *one* to whom Pharaoh had said: "See, I have set thee over all the land of Egypt. I am Pharaoh, and without thee shall no man lift up his hand or his foot in all the land of Egypt." They had seen this ruler ride in his chariot with a courier running before him, crying: "Atrekt" (bow the knee); and every man had done so. He permitted them to go out or come in as they pleased. He met them and retained one, according to his words: "Ye are spies, but if ye be honest men bring down your younger brother to me."

## CHAPTER XVI

### JOSEPH; OR THE OLD HOME AND THE NEW

A GREAT wall was once built, extending from the Gulf of Suez on the south to the Mediterranean Sea on the north. This shut in the land of Egypt and prevented the attack of an enemy from the northeast. From the standpoint of durability this wall was like the "great wall of China," which the northern tribes found difficult to take. It was broken here and there by great gates, which were closed at night during times of peace, and day and night during times of danger. At certain distances along the wall, towers were built, and in them was stationed a garrison of soldiers, while between them, a sentinel was ever keeping guard.

This wall may not have existed in its entirety when Joseph's brothers passed out of Egypt, yet there were guards and patrols whose duty it was to announce when strangers left or kingdom of Egypt. It

sigh of inexpressible relief that the brothers passed from the shadow of those towers. Their anxiety was perhaps occasioned over the fact



CARAVAN DE-  
PARTING FOR  
THE LAND OF  
CANAAN.

entered the  
was with a

that they had discovered, upon opening their sacks, as they halted to prepare their first meal, that the money which they took to pay for corn was still in their possession. In place of looking upon it as a gift, they considered it more as an omen of ill. They had no occasion to think it was done as a kindness to them.

While they continue their journey, let us notice some of the changes which have taken place in Canaan. You remember during the life of Abraham, when famine struck the land, he moved his camp and family down into Egypt. Circumstances since then had greatly changed. Now a regular trade was being carried on between Egypt and Canaan, hence it was not necessary to move one's family down into Egypt in order to get supplies. When anything was needed, one or more members of the family could go and purchase what was required—or, better still, could exchange such things as they could dispose of for whatever they needed in return.

Jacob's sons had gone to purchase corn. They were returning with a sad heart, for one of their number was missing. They bore up bravely, so as to tell Jacob in as cheerful a spirit as they could all about it, and to explain also about the money which they had used to pay for the corn and which was still in their sacks. The friends at home had been watching for their arrival, and were greatly delighted when they beheld them coming in the distance. All was joy until the empty saddle and the missing Simeon were discovered. Travelers never come home without being greeted with joy, but this was an exceptional case. Here was an absent one, in a lonely land and in prison. Perhaps he never would join them again.

These good people talked it over and over. The family at home never tired of hearing about it—how Simeon looked or how he bore the trial, and why the ruler said: "You must bring Benjamin down." All this time the corn was diminishing by kernels, until it was plain to be seen they must go to Egypt again or starve. Jacob alone stood in the way. They could have gone and gotten back while he was making up his mind. He had a fear—yes, a double fear—he was afraid if he let Benjamin go he might never return, and he was afraid that all of them would be arrested because of the money which they found in their sacks.

This is the way it is related: "And it came to pass, as they



emptied their sacks, that behold, every man's bundle of money was in his sack; and when both they and their father saw the bundle of money they were afraid."

After a time the fear of starvation moved Jacob to comply with the demand of the ruler. Before doing so, however, he said, with almost childish impatience: "You should not have told the Egyptian of your brother." They replied: "We did not know that he would ask us to bring our brother down. We were honest, and tried to prove it."



THE DISCOVERY OF MONEY IN THEIR SACKS.

They finally started, with Benjamin in the party. They took back also the money they found in their sacks, with other money to pay for additional corn. This abundance of money showed they had no need of stealing and that they desired to correct any mistake that might have been made. In addition to this, they complied with the customs of the country and carried with them a present for the ruler. Orientals never think of approaching a great man without first making him a present. Only recently, you remember, the imposing British embassy under Rodd when appearing before Menelek, the Emperor of Abyssinia, carried up many tokens of esteem. Jacob sent native gifts, such as syrup, nuts, fruits and spices of Canaan. The sending to Joseph

natural gifts from home, reminds me of a gentleman who was once sitting in a hotel in a far-away city; the country about had no grass, no glorious meadows, no forests of maple, oak, sycamore, hickory, or poplar, such as he had been accustomed to at home. Stopping at the same hotel was also a woman. She, too, had come from the land of flowers and trees. One day she said to the gentleman: "Oh, will you not talk about the grass and the trees?" It was the story of home when they conversed on this subject. There was a sweet suggestiveness in it that the new country, let it be ever so charming, could not contain. So it was with the simple presents which the sons of Jacob took down to Egypt. They were bits of Canaan. Though they knew it not, no present could have been more acceptable to Joseph than that which they carried.

Journeying onward, the brothers ere long reached the scenes made familiar by their first visit. Closer and closer they came unto Joseph's kingdom. Soon they arrived at his domain, and when he perceived that they had brought Benjamin he said to his steward: "Take these men to my house, for they will dine with me to-day." The servant did as he was bidden.

When the brothers reached Joseph's home they were much disturbed, and feared they were brought there for an explanation and perhaps punishment because of the money found in their sacks. They tried to explain their innocence to the steward, who told them he thought there was no danger and reassured them by bringing forth Simeon. Meeting the brother was a consolation, but the clouds had not yet broken. In the meantime, they prepared the present and waited for Joseph's arrival. While they wait his appearance, let us pass through his home.

The brothers, in order to enter the gardens and palace, had first to pass a high wall, the interior of which was artistically decorated with paintings. At either side of the swinging gate was an imposing staff, from which floated streamers of colored silk. Passing through, they entered a wide paved court. Along the sides of this were covered walks, the covers being supported by handsomely painted columns. The brothers crossed the court, then came to a second gate. After passing through this they entered the gardens. These contained fruit trees, vines, shrubs, and all manner of flowers. Here, too, were the palm,

acacia, fig tree, pomegranate, the white and yellow jasmine, all growing in great luxuriance. Each garden, for there were several, had its own reservoir, from which water was carried to all parts of the park. Instead of steam to furnish the water power, the tireless tread of oxen day and night became the power that turned the water wheels.

At the farthest side of this paradise arose the palace, spacious and grand. In some places it was one story, in others two, and in other places it was even higher. Each room on the lower floor had a separate door leading out on a verandah which ran the whole length of the house. At a right angle to the palace was a row of store-rooms, which cut off from view the vegetable-producing garden. It hid also the wine-house and larders of the household.

The interior of the palace was in harmony with the exterior; lounges, couches and tables of the finest wood were scattered about. Rare artistic skill gave rein to fancy, and thus the whole interior was a delight to the eye. Many chairs were of ivory, some of carved mahogany, others inlaid with precious stones. On the mantels



JOSEPH MAKES HIMSELF KNOWN TO HIS  
BRETHREN.



and sideboards were rare china, vases of bronze, rock crystal, gold, silver and pearl. Delicate perfumes issued from flowers which were everywhere to be found; among them the attar of roses. The carpets and rugs were of the richest designs and material. The skin of the tawny lion, the beautiful leopard and the fierce tiger, met the eye in many shapes, scattered in profusion about the floors.

The service was magnificent. Every conceivable luxury was brought from the field, where troops of slaves were constantly in attendance. Joseph came to the dining hall, with white sandals on his feet, a gold collar about his neck, bracelets on his arms and ankles. A wand was in his hand signifying authority. Every guest had placed over his shoulder a garland of roses; on his head a wreath of lotus blossoms. A choir rendered music soft and sweet. These were the scenes witnessed by these simple brothers as they dined with Joseph.

Here they brought the present, and in presenting it bowed themselves to the earth the same as they would have done before Pharaoh. These reminders brought back to Joseph his childhood and his home. They were just such as he himself had gathered from the old trees, and now that they had been prepared by the loved ones at home, how full of meaning they seemed!

Joseph first asked them of their welfare and then said: "Is there peace to your father, the old man of whom you spake? Is he yet alive?" See the tenderness and anxiety! They answered, "He is yet alive." Then turning to Benjamin, he said: "Is this the youngest brother?" Upon their affirmation, he said: "God be gracious to thee, my son." Many a time Joseph had carried Benjamin in his arms. Now he seemed more like a son than a brother. Memory swept in, and, giving way to emotion, Joseph was compelled to leave their presence. After recovering himself he commanded the dinner to be set before them. The priests gave thanks and the sorrow was drowned in the music.

Dignity and custom demanded that the host as priest and king eat alone. The Egyptians of the party had also a table by themselves. They looked upon foreigners as barbarians. The priests touched no food from abroad, neither dish nor utensil handled by a foreigner. They shut themselves off from the world as did China and Japan a few years ago. Joseph's brothers sat by themselves, arranged at the table in order according to age.

Nothing was overlooked. If their fears had been aroused by the arrangement, showing that some one knew their ages, these were dissipated as the meal progressed. In attempting to explain it to themselves, they looked upon it as nothing particularly uncommon, for he was called "the preserver of life," "the diviner of dreams," and "the revealer of secrets." Truly nothing was hidden from him. Joseph, in the true oriental fashion, sent delicacies from his table to each of them. This was a mark of great esteem shown by the host for his guest. The portions sent to Benjamin were five times greater than those sent to the others. An unusual honor had been conferred upon them, hence, when outward-bound for Canaan the second time, they went with a feeling of regret lest they might never see the city and the like again. The scenes differed from everything else in the world. With all the ruler's greatness, he was still a man. In his strength he was like the pyramids; in calmness, like the majestic sphinx gazing in mildness over the desert. He was unharmed by the gaudy and elegant life. In going, they little realized that farewell was not good-by. Joseph arranged one final test. Like a good commander he adopted a plan, made the attack, and with exact precision, delivered the blow. He knew that his brothers had hated and plotted against himself. He concluded to test them now regarding their love for Benjamin. The question was, how will they behave in this final test? Will they sacrifice Benjamin? It depended on their behavior what his future course would be.

The brothers, eleven in all, had not gone far beyond the city when Joseph told his steward to overtake and charge them with a theft. This theft was to consist of the finding of a divining cup which he had ordered to be placed in Benjamin's sack and of which they were thoroughly innocent. The servant, according to orders, overtook and accused them of returning "evil for good." The brothers strenuously denied the charge, urging that their conduct was a proof of their uprightness. They then told the servant to search them, saying, "This will prove our innocence." The search began with the sack of the eldest and ended with the youngest. Imagine their surprise when they found that the charge was correct—the cup was found in the sack of Benjamin! There was intense grief, as shown by the oriental method of tearing their clothes, yet every man prepared to return. They upheld Benja-



JACOB'S ARRIVAL IN EGYPT.



min without even so much as a murmur. While on the return journey let us stop to note the significance of a "divining cup."

These were of various shapes and made of all kinds of material. Some were rich and rare, others moderate in price. Each owner possessed one according to his means and taste. They were used to reveal mysteries and to foretell the future. The person using one poured water into it, then gazed down into its depths and related what he saw. Divining cups were highly esteemed by the Egyptians, and the stealing of one was considered as great an evil as the robbing of a cathedral or the taking by stealth of an offering to a deity.

The brothers returned in great haste to make amends to him who had saddened, puzzled and charmed them. Joseph was at first unforgiving and said that the person in whose sack the cup was found should remain a slave. Judah immediately stepped forward and said: "I wish to speak a few words to my lord. I beg him to remember that in our former conversation we gave him the history of our house. My lord was gracious enough to ask concerning the health of our father the aged one, who is now awaiting our return. He longs, day by day, with increasing feverishness for our coming. I will not, my lord, weary you with more than is necessary, but it is for our father that I must plead. His life hinges on the life of Benjamin. My lord will be gracious enough to remember that we spoke to him of one brother who is not; his name was Joseph. Years ago Joseph left us and nevermore returned. This was a sorrow from which our father has never recovered. In our land, summer is succeeded by autumn—by a season of rest and peace. Our father in passing through the summer of life raised ten sons—in the time of rest and peace Joseph and Benjamin were born to him of Rachel. These days were days of rest—the rest which comes before the foot-tracks in the snow. Suddenly Joseph disappeared. Almost instantly his life changed. Like the mountains of Lebanon, one day we saw them free from snow, and awakened the following day and they were white with winter; thus did my father's happy day suddenly change. He grew stooped of shoulder, the care lines ran from his eyes over his cheek, and the white covered his head.

"The love which he divided between the two darlings of his beloved Rachel now fell in sweet fellowship upon Benjamin. He became indeed the son of his right hand, which my lord doubtless remembers

is the interpretation of the name—Benjamin. When planning to come to Egypt to buy corn, we said to our father that the Egyptian ruler demanded that we bring the lad down with us and thus prove our honesty. Our father when hearing it was stricken with faintness, but after thinking the matter over, and realizing that we, with our children, would starve if we did not come and buy corn, he gave consent, but *we* who know him best saw that a weariness had taken hold of him as it did that night when on the ridge of the mountain he wrestled with the angel. My father said, 'Benjamin can go, and the Lord God Almighty go with the lad.'

"On the day we left, the sunlight was just falling on the home where our loved ones dwelt. There were no songs sung, and no tears shed—only a hush prevailed—yet the going seemed as discordant as unchimed bells. My father said naught, yet leaning on his staff he watched us off. The last view which greeted our eyes as we passed out of sight was the bare-headed sentinel, silent, motionless, still gazing far after us. They are waiting for us now, and if we go back with one saddle empty, and that saddle Benjamin's—but I cannot go farther. I cannot say more. My lord, I cannot look on my father's sorrow. Will my lord be gracious? Will my lord take *me* for bondman and let my brother Benjamin go free?"

Joseph could endure no more. Commanding the Egyptians to retire from the room, he lifted up his voice and wept. The years of waiting had ended at last.

His tears frightened them more than all else. Then he told them who he was. He said that what they had intended for evil God had turned to good and all was well. They then discussed measures and means to bring down the family into the land of Egypt.

As soon as possible they returned home with a procession of wagons, animals and everything necessary to carry out the plan of emigration. This time it was "outward bound," with a joy and freedom utterly beyond explanation. When they told Jacob, he could not at first believe it; but when he saw the wagons he said, "Joseph is yet alive. I will go down to see him before I die."

At a sacred place on the border land of Egypt, Jacob held a religious meeting. Here he inquired of God, who told him to go to Egypt. Joseph, with the majesty of a king, went out to meet

his father, and when they met they fell into each other's arms and wept.

By the wise provision and foresight of Joseph, Pharaoh granted them a place in the richest portion of the land of Egypt. All Egypt rejoiced over the story of the family reunion and of their coming to live in Egypt.

Jacob was presented at court, where Pharaoh received him as if he were his own parent, and Jacob blessed him in return as a son.

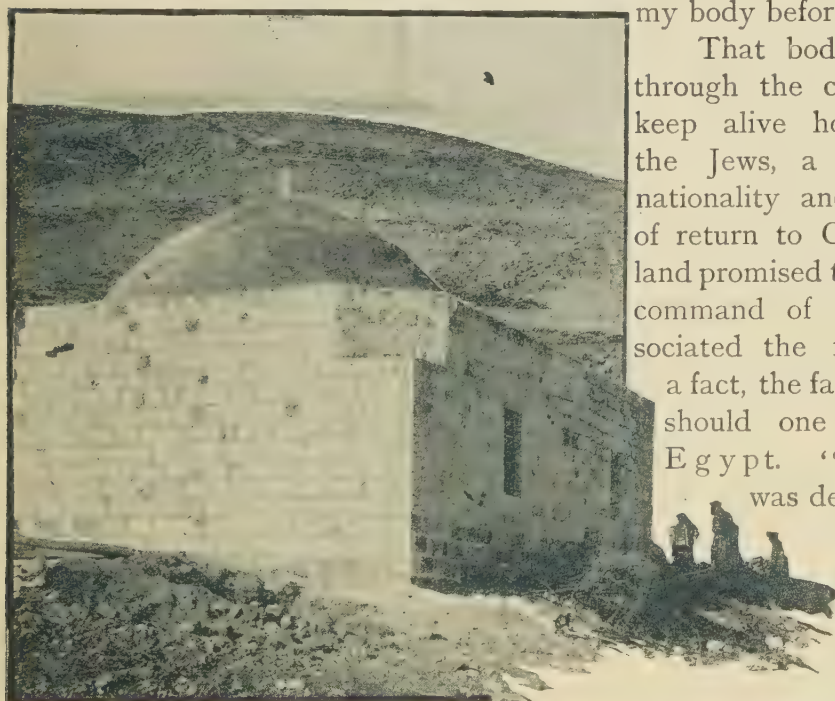
The years are not long now for Jacob. He assigned in his will the land of Canaan to his sons, whose descendants constituted the twelve tribes. His dying charge was: "Bury me not here; bury me in Canaan with my kindred."

The brothers thought that the death of the father would change Joseph's demeanor toward them. But Joseph calmed their fears, recognizing in all the changes a higher destiny.

When Joseph died, he said to his people: "Bury me not in Egypt. When you go up from this land, as you surely will, forget not to take my body before the host."

That body served through the centuries to keep alive hope among the Jews, a thought of nationality and a surety of return to Canaan, the land promised them. The command of Joseph associated the nation with a fact, the fact that they should one day leave Egypt. "Though he was dead, yet did he speak."

You will remember that Joseph called his elder son Manasseh. He



JOSEPH'S TOMB.



did this, he said, "because the Lord hath made me to forget my father's house." You will recall that we said he never could forget his father's house. This command shows that he could not. Notwithstanding the Egyptian glory, he had the Hebrew heart. That was right. He never forgot his father's house.

And when they finally buried him, where do you think he was placed to rest? By that field of wheat, where in his dream he saw the reapers, near those pasture lands where he had followed his brothers before they sold him. Yes, they buried him in Shechem. As a soldier of fortune he desired to be buried on his battlefield. Here they finally buried him when they went back to old Canaan many generations after his death. He had a deathless hope, courage and sympathy. His life was singular in its beauty and power. And it was fitting that he should sleep at last where the fields of his home grew golden in the wheat which stood upright in the sunlight.

## CHAPTER XVII

### JOCHEBED, MIRIAM AND MERRIS ; OR THE WOMEN WHO TRAINED MOSES.

NOW that it was a time of peace in Egypt, Pharaoh felt that he could oppress Israel and bring her into bondage. He realized that during a war her people might join forces with the enemy, owing to the fact that they dwelt in the northeast portion, a section most liable to be attacked from outside nations, and so escape from his power.

It was a time of profound peace—and more than this, Pharaoh had recently made a treaty with the Hittite empire, then in Syria, to return all slaves who escaped from Egypt.

Had Israel attempted to flee that way, the Hittites would have forced her back, owing to this alliance with Egypt.

Pharaoh had bound



THE HIDING OF MOSES.

himself to do for the Hittites just what they had agreed to do for him. Hence it was in this period of profound peace that Pharaoh, Seti I., with his son Rameses II. as associate king, issued the startling decree which brought sorrow to so many homes and the life of Moses into prominence.

Pharaoh, who had been in that part of Egypt known as Goshen, saw the thrift, numbers and prosperity of Israel. Because of their power he feared that his own nation would in time become imperiled by them; so, seizing a good opportunity, he issued a decree to the effect that all male children born to the Israelites during certain dates, should be destroyed at birth.

We must not think this was the first oppression of Israel. She was oppressed soon after Joseph's death, when a new dynasty arose. While this oppression was a specially cruel one, it fortunately did not last long.

Regarding *this* particular decree of Pharaoh, there is a tradition to the effect that a certain learned scribe had said to Pharaoh that a boy would be born in the near future from among the Hebrew children who would some day destroy the power and kingdom of Egypt. No doubt the scribe stated that the destroyer of Egypt's greatness would come from a group of children born between certain dates. This edict was aimed with a view of covering the periods foretold, and hence was in force but a short time.

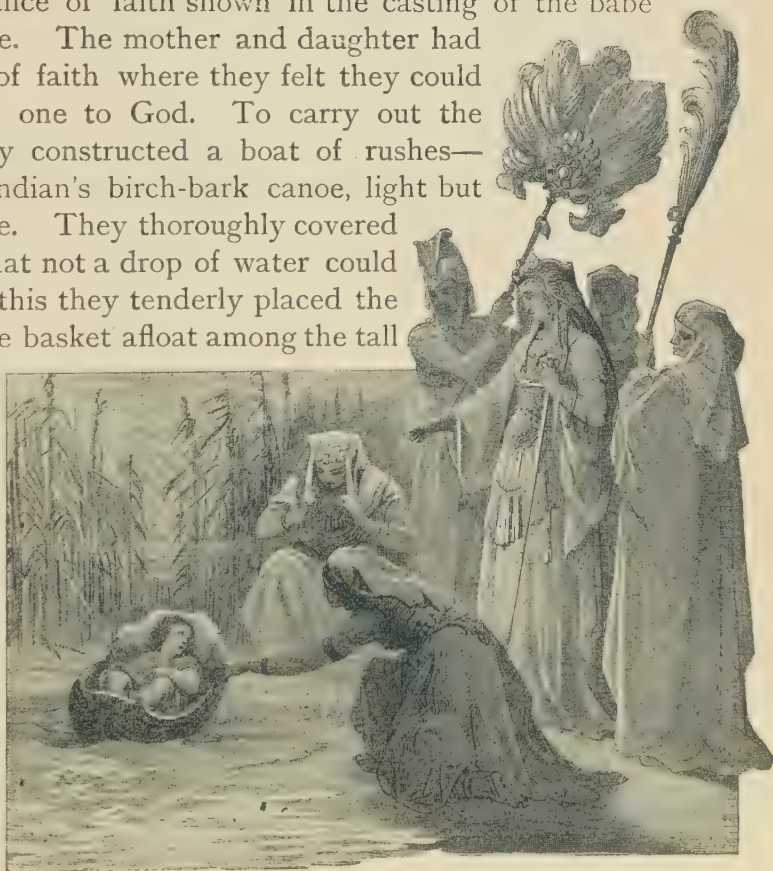
Notwithstanding Pharaoh's precaution, however, a Hebrew child came into the world who was destined to figure prominently in Egyptian history. Fortunately, he was a child of exceptional beauty and singular intelligence. His father's name was Amram, his mother's, Jochebed. He had a sister by the name of Miriam and a brother by the name of Aaron, both older than himself. Previous to his birth the parents saw as in a vision that a great career was before the boy. They felt they must save his life, but how to do it was a question. Pharaoh's edict caused them much solicitude, but they finally hit upon a novel scheme. The mother and sister were prominently involved in the transaction, and for that matter figured largely in his whole subsequent career. What they were about to do must of necessity be a work of cunning and then of trust. They realized if the Egyptian officers suspected them, not only *they*, but the whole family would be subject to death for disobedience.

Jochebed, the mother, hit upon a singular and daring plan; one which resulted in bringing them all to safety. We must not, though, look upon it as the wisdom of a human plan merely, but as a presentiment from God made effective through faith in a mother's heart. There was too much greatness and too much history involved in the outcome



for mere human contrivance, even though that and that only appears on the surface. The very name Jochebed means "the glory of Jehovah." Her frail life held the destiny of three millions of people. Her tribe, the Levites, were the scholars and holy men of the nation. The names of two of Jochebed's children—Aaron and Miriam—show what she was thinking about. Aaron means both "mountaineer" and "enlightenment." Miriam means "rebellion." The mother's heart rebelled against Egyptian environment. She instilled this same patriotism into her daughter's life, and the girl cultivated it in her heart. They were two frail women, yet they eventually broke the power of Egypt.

We have dwelt at length upon this, because it better prepares us for the exciting romance of faith shown in the casting of the babe on the flowing Nile. The mother and daughter had risen to the point of faith where they felt they could commit the little one to God. To carry out the mother's plan they constructed a boat of rushes—made it like the Indian's birch-bark canoe, light but tough and durable. They thoroughly covered it with pitch, so that not a drop of water could penetrate it. In this they tenderly placed the babe, then sent the basket afloat among the tall lotus plants and reeds. These acted as a natural umbrella for the boat as it lazily floated in and out among the flowering plants. Little by little it gradually drifted down to the place where the Egyptian princess, Merri, was accustomed to walk and



THE FINDING OF MOSES.

bathe. While walking in the early morning, along the banks, attired in her bath-robe, she saw the tiny boat down amid the growing plants drifting on its gentle way to the sea. She was attracted to it by its unique creation. She smiled, then ordered the floating child to be taken from its peril and brought to her.

As the infant looked on faces sympathetic yet strange, it grew afraid and cried. Tears reach the throne of God, and why not human hearts and Pharaoh's throne? He had decreed death to children, but when this one came, his decree was of no avail. The infant's clinging hand won his heart. Immediately when Merris glanced at the child she perceived a Hebrew child. Then it was that Miriam, the sister of Moses, who had watched the little craft, appeared. Though young, she was cool, capable and quick, and stepped forward asking if she should not obtain a Hebrew nurse for the foundling. The child was afraid of strangers, but clung to her and was appeased. No one knew their relationship. The logic of the question and the calming influence of the Hebrew girl naturally appealed to the mind of the princess and she said, "Yes, bring a Hebrew nurse." Where could a better nurse be found than the child's own mother? The beauty of the boy touched the woman of royal blood. His origin was nothing to her, even though the Egyptians might not forget nor forgive. Its life hung upon the care it received.

Merris in due time took the child to Pharaoh and he was adopted as her son. This adoption made him a prince, with power to ascend the throne of Egypt.

He might have been the greatest of Pharaohs, but what is *that* compared with his fame as it *now* stands before a world and before heaven itself? It was to his mother and his sister that he was indebted for those great ideas which have made him perhaps the leading figure of all ages. Except for them, his giant intellect would have been devoted to Egypt as a loyal Egyptian. Day by day *they* instilled those priceless thoughts into his life which kept him free from the vices and false religion which surrounded him. They imbedded religion into his life so firmly that nothing could disturb it.

As the time came for him to pass from their daily care, they turned him over to the princess with the feeling that he was still in God's hands and all was well.

Merris named him Moses—a name which records his salvation from peril on the Nile—"saved from, or drawn out of the water." She found that he differed radically from all that surrounded him. His quaint language, his school life, his induction into the priesthood as a member of the royal family, his command in the army, his enthusiasm as he went from capital to capital, made him ever an interesting figure to her.

And, true it was, he ever grew in charm, education, godliness and strength, whether he associated with the people at the palace or with his own family, the Hebrew people. Dearer than princess or palace, dearer than rank and file, was his *own* mother, who had planned his future, writing on his spirit the imperishable and great things which made him the hero of the world.

The lofty plant, whose blossom attracts and whose perfume intoxicates, needs not so much a rugged breeze to lure it on, as it does a quiet *daily* care. This brings out its greatest glory. So the



MOSES BEFORE PHARAOH'S DAUGHTER.



royal son of a slave people needed not so much the king's garden for its growth as the mother's watchful care. The mother's influence was the angel's touch. It day by day made the boy manful, made the honor great. To be the son of Jochebed of the tribe of Israel and yet to wear the crown and inherit the throne of Egypt was an honor he hoped to justly fill. He loved Merris—he loved her with a great love—yet his love for his mother and his mother's God made him ready and willing to do their bidding also.

History does not tell us whether Merris ever became disappointed in Moses, but it does tell us of Miriam and her great joy over her brother's victory long years after his babyhood. She is designated in history as a prophetess, or one who speaks for God. On the occasion of the great triumph of Israel she became inspired and impressed with the idea that she was more of spirit than flesh. She held a timbrel, and while other women played the instruments she sang a song—a song belonging to the imperishable ages. “Sing ye to the Lord, for he hath triumphed gloriously; the horse and his rider hath he thrown into the sea.” She sang this song by the seashore, and a more fitting place could hardly have been found, for the waves ran in unison with her song and the wild winds wafted an answer to the sea. Nations have sung it again and again since then, but no one has ever equaled that first triumph. She had the timbrels of a nation for an orchestra, the sea for a chorus, the reeds for a mighty organ, and untold ages to chant her poem and song. It will never age and never lose its power. Miriam, Miriam, the undying soloist, the matchless stateswoman! This is the first recorded solo in the Bible and Miriam was the soloist.

On one occasion, when the people of Israel in their march to the Promised Land came to the borders of the land of Canaan, they digged a well. There is a tradition connected with it which calls this well the river of Miriam. In this beautiful incident we have the marvelous illustration of the greatness of Miriam's life in the nation. She was to the people what a river is to a land needing water. No grander word can be said of a life than that.

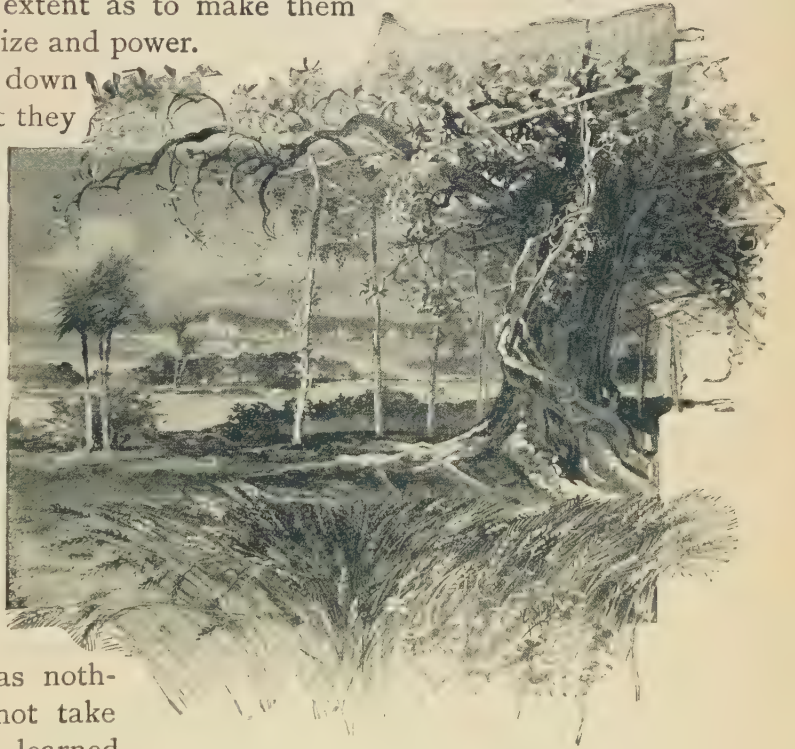
She died at Kadesh and was buried in a rock-hewn tomb in the hills of Petra. The nation mourned for her thirty days. At her death she was missed as a river is missed. Her presence to the prophet brothers had been their help from infancy. They felt the blow.

## CHAPTER XVIII

### MOSES: OR LAYING DOWN A CROWN

WHEN Abraham and his family journeyed from Canaan down into Egypt, there were seventy people in the party. Since then about four hundred years had elapsed. Now, as his descendants leave the land of Egypt to return to the land of Canaan, their number has increased to such an extent as to make them a nation of wonderful size and power.

God took them down into Egypt in order that they might learn from the Egyptians all that could be learned from the greatest nation of the world. We can properly say that they had been to school in the land of Egypt. They tilled the soil, built houses, cut gems, wove garments, dyed yarns, cooked, studied, drilled in the armies, and learned their method of government. There was nothing in which they did not take an active part. They learned everything which constituted the



A LAND OF GREAT RICHNESS.

life of a great people. They located in a very productive portion of Egypt, called the land of Goshen. The exact limits are not known, but it was considered the richest of the delta country. It did not have the hills of Palestine to make it beautiful, but it had all that a flat

country could possess to make it attractive. It was a land of great richness, and, suffice it to say, the Israelites would never have left it had they not been persecuted and enslaved. God permitted slavery to come upon them, thus making them *willing* to leave it.

Fortunately, we have a description of the land as it appeared to an old settler at the time of Moses. It was left to us in a letter. This shows why they sighed for Egypt as they journeyed in the desert. It reads as follows:

"I arrived at the city of Rameses Miamum, and found it a very charming place, with which nothing in or around Thebes can compare. The seat of the court is here. It is pleasant to live in. Its fields are full of good things and life passes in constant plenty and abundance. It has a daily market. Its canals are rich in fish; its lakes swarm with birds; its meadows are green with vegetables; there is no end of the lentils and melons, which taste like honey and grow in its irrigated fields. Its barns are full of wheat and durra and reach as high as heaven. Onions and leeks grow in the trenches in the enclosures. The vine, the almond tree, and the fig tree grow in the gardens. There is plenty of sweet wine, a product of Egypt, which they mix with honey. The red fish is in the Lotus canal; the Borian fish in the ponds; many kinds of Bori fish besides carp and pike are in the canal; fat fish and kephli-penna fish in the pools of the inundation; the honey fish in the full mouth of the Nile near Fanis. The pool of Horus furnishes salt; the Pan-hura lake, nitre. The ships enter the harbor; plenty and abundance are perpetual. He rejoices who has settled here. The reedy lake is full of lilies; that of Pshenson is gay with papyrus flowers. Fruits from the nurseries; flowers from the gardens; festoons from the vineyards; birds from the ponds, are dedicated to the feast of King Rameses. Those who live near the sea come with fish. Feasts in honor of the heavenly bodies and of the great events of the seasons interest the whole population. The youth are perpetually clad in festive attire, with fine oil on their heads of freshly curled hair. On the day when Rameses II. came to the city they stood at their doors with branches of flowers in their hands and garlands on their heads. All the people were assembled, neighbor with neighbor, to bring forward their complaints. Girls trained in the singing schools of Memphis filled the air with songs.



“The wine was delicious; the cider was like sugar; the sherbet, like almonds mixed with honey. They sat there with joyful heart or walked about without ceasing.”

The above description rightly sets forth the land of Goshen. It is unfortunate that more letters like this are not preserved. It may be that Moses was in the procession they were welcoming.

In the midst of such scenes Israel grew into a powerful multitude. At intervals, persecutions were brought to bear upon her people. They were not free. The king could at any moment take whom he chose for the army or for any public work.

Moses attended the schools of Egypt. The scripture tells us that he was learned in all the wis-



ISRAELITES BEING CARRIED INTO SLAVERY.

dom of the Egyptians. Only during his vacations could he be present at court with the princess or could he have the company of his own mother in her humble home.

His home with the princess was beautiful. It faced the Nile and formed one of a group of buildings in the king's gardens. The house was of brick and wood. That portion which was of wood was exquisitely carved. It was surrounded by a wall which was intersected by towers, forming a strong fortification, yet all constructed in harmonious proportions. The gates were surmounted by slender columns from which floated the royal banners whenever the king was in his residence.

At the top of the columns were brass spikes, giving it a splendid appearance and at the same time acting as conductors for lightning. At the right, surrounded by a grove of trees, were the homes of the royal women. The central building was Pharaoh's palace; back of this were the store-houses and barracks. At the latter place was stationed the king's bodyguard. To the left were the homes of the officers. The roofs of the houses were of various colors, all lending a charm indescribable.

In order to view the place where Moses lived, we cross a handsome bridge to the palace of the princess. We first pass through the gardens, where scores of gardeners in attendance are looking after the grass, trees, shrubs and flowers. Passing on, we come to a square.

Her favorite room overlooked the river. From this, light curtains of rare color opened on a balcony. In another room was located the silver brought from old Damascus. Here the covering of the chairs and couches was embroidered with feathers wrought out by Ethiopian women. On the princess' dressing-table were toilet-boxes of ebony and ivory.

The lower part of the adjoining room was covered with white tile and violet earthenware, giving it a cool and airy appearance. Divans covered with fine linen, skirted the walls. A long table stood in the center of the room, while comfortable chairs and stools were everywhere to be found. Out of this room opened others, all harmonious, cool and beautiful. In some were obelisks of ebony, upon which were saucers used for the burning of incense.

The gardens were as beautiful as the palace. Every design filled the eye with rapture, fountains played and streams hid themselves beneath the shade of tall and graceful trees.

We have dwelt at length upon this scene because it was Moses' boyhood home and the place he visited when he came to see the princess. Let us at this point turn to his higher education, which was completed away from both his homes. His incorporation into the royal family made him a priest as well as a prince. The university which



A BIT OF MARSH IN THE LAND OF GOSHEN.

he attended was located at On, the same city where Joseph lived with his wife's father.

Outside of the university were cottages for servants, litter-bearers, cooks, washermen, washerwomen and water-carriers, as well as accommodation for all other serving people that the temple and university required. The great libraries were full of scribes. Here were the noisy undergraduates and the staid upper students, who passed on from year to year to the upper grades of learning.

It is difficult to tell what was really taught here, for all was kept secret within the educated circle. Modern scholars affirm that they believed in "the one true Deity." Be that as it may, there was much taught that was great and lofty, for even Greeks of the highest scholarship, like Plato in ideal philosophy and Democritus in material philosophy, with many others, like Solon in law and wisdom, obtained their learning here.



Medicine, as well as religion and government, must have found its home here, for we are told they taught anatomy, pathology, therapeutics, and the diseases of the eye.

This will give us a hint of what God was doing for the Israelites of Egypt in educating Moses at the University of On. His governmental training was of inestimable value when he came to mold his wandering people during the forty years in the wilderness. Though long held in abeyance, yet when occasion demanded, it sprung up in all its glory like parched Egyptian grass when it came in contact with the water of the sacred river.

The nobles of Egypt thought the common people differed in constitution and organization from them. In watching the taskmaster drive them to work, they deemed it quite as proper as driving a loaded horse.

There are nobles in exile to-day who *cannot* remain in their native lands because the common people, who are as much entitled to peace and privileges of the government as the princes, are impoverished by unequal conditions. The hope of the people lies in this thought. Every now and then some great man rises and leads the people to liberty.

Moses was taught that his people were God's people, and he would never acknowledge slavery, but proclaimed freedom. When he heard the groans, saw the tears and listened to the prayers, great agony was in his heart. The burden, instead of growing lighter, grew heavier day by day. He was so wrought up that at last when he saw an overseer strike one of his countrymen, he struck him in return and killed him. It was not an ordinary blow. All the tears and suffering of his whole people were in it. He struck not a soldier, but a system, a government, in that blow. It was a blow for freedom, and like the shot at Lexington and Concord it declared a revolution. It was not meant for murder!

He did an unpardonable thing, to the Egyptian mind, when he buried the body of the soldier in the sand. Egyptian burial and preparation for burial, you will recall, was the one thing held sacred above all else. Death was not so great a thing, for life was common and of little value, but preparation of the body for the hereafter was of great importance.

No one saw the transaction except the man who had been saved. He disclosed the tragedy.

That is the strange thing in all ages, that the person most benefited and helped, is, sometimes, the least grateful; but we do not do good to please, nor are we betrayed into a wrong way of doing right or led into the right way of doing it for praise or sympathy. We do it because we consider it right.

Moses fled. He did not leave the country because he feared the king or because he feared any one else. Undoubtedly he had absented himself more and more from court. He held the embarrassing position of a prince upholding a slave's cause. That position has always invited insult, ostracism, suspicion and loss of esteem. He understood all this and was willing to suffer for his people's sake, but when he found that they, his own people, misunderstood him, that they were wholly unprepared for his ideas, he unhesitatingly left Egypt and all its greatness.



THE UNREASONABLE TASK-  
MASTERS.

He had no position there, so went by the most direct route to Arabia, where dwelt a kindred people.

At this time he was forty years of age. The mother's visions and dreams before his birth, his early training, his university education, all seemed to perish in an hour. Still the dream was not ended. His life in Egypt simply closed the first act. The drama consisted of three acts and in each one there were many scenes. We look at him as a defeated hero, forgetting all the time that the play is going forward. In the scene just closing he has disappointed us, but remember that what sometimes seem like steps taken backward are God's steps forward. His going away, which seemed to lay down a nation's hope, was a necessary act in order that he might accomplish the work of his life. He did not know it, but God did, and all was well.



## CHAPTER XIX

### MOSES; OR THE EDUCATION OF SILENCE

IN the previous chapter we called attention to the thoroughness of an Egyptian education. We now turn from the academy to nature—to the desert, the gorges, and the mountains. In the presence of nature the restless spirit of Moses died away and became silent as the rocks which stood motionless against the horizon.

You will recall his slaying the Egyptian taskmaster. He thought his people, whom you will remember as slaves, would see in *this* the possibility of victory, demand their freedom, and proclaim themselves a nation. The words of his mother, which had rung in his ears since childhood, taught him that some day there would be a Jewish nation. Up to this time his people had not been known as such. They were sim-



AN OLD WELL IN THE ENVIRONS OF CANAAN.

ply a slave people in a foreign land. In looking back upon his rash conduct, he saw that his blow for freedom had failed. It appeared more like a homicide than a patriotic aim. Now that he had made the issue and failed, there was neither future for him among the nobles of Egypt nor a congeniality among his own bond-people, and, too, he was determined to be free. To do this he must get away and must prepare for the future. In taking up the journey he felt that every plan of his own life was broken, and saw for his people only a hopeless

outlook. His disappointment bordered on madness. As a refuge, he drifted, as he thought, into an absolute freedom from all questions of national life and principle, but found himself sinking into deeper and broader seas. At times, though, there was a calm, and then again he drifted and drifted along.

Nothing, however, was being lost. He had learned from the statesmen in Egypt, from the city politicians, and from the army officers, the requirements of a nation. He was now learning of God, meekness and patience. There was a work before him which nothing but a meek spirit could carry out. By "meekness" we do not mean merely submission, but a quality of courage which does not fail under any burden which may be placed upon it—therefore, "the meek shall inherit the earth."

There were scattered up in Palestine and down in the peninsula of Sinai descendants of Ishmael, of Esau, of Lot, and even of Abraham. It was to these people that Moses determined to travel.

While the journey was not easy, yet there was nothing dangerous in it except the thought that he might be overtaken and brought back to Egypt as a prisoner. So far, however, as food, drink and shelter were concerned, he did not need to suffer. To offset whatever worry he may have had, there was a sense of freedom, a breadth and a height of life, which up to this moment he had never understood and which sustained him on his journey.

When fleeing from Egypt he took a course which led him to the land of Midian, where Jethro, a sort of kinsman, resided. He was not really a relative, but belonged to the same country, and was akin to him in something the same manner as one American is akin to another.

Jethro was a leader of the Midianites. His name implied "His Excellence," a title given him as political and civil head of the tribe. He was also what is termed to-day an Amir, or a religious head. He was also designated by the title of Reuel, "Friend of God." The two names signified the double office.

We question if Moses ever thought of going back to Egypt, for the scripture says: "Now when Pharaoh heard this thing, he sought to slay Moses; but Moses fled from the face of Pharaoh and dwelt in the land of Midian."

"On arriving at Midian he sat down by a well. Now the Prince

of Midian had seven daughters, and they came and filled the troughs to water their father's flocks." You will remember that this is an old and a familiar custom. Here again the daughters of the chief of the land fed and watered their father's flocks as in the days of Abraham.

"And the shepherds came and drove them away, but Moses stood up and helped them water their flocks." The large flocks made much trouble, for each had to wait his turn at the troughs. Sometimes it so happened that shepherds were rude and impatient, each wanting to be first; then quarrels were apt to result—feuds and strife often took place. On this occasion Moses stood manfully up, demanding that the women be shown due respect.

To-day, and in our cities especially, when we wish to look up the whereabouts of a person, we go to a directory. In the time of Moses, the best method to look up a person was to go to a well, wait there, and after due course of time some one was apt to appear who could tell the whereabouts of the one who was being sought. This was why Moses waited at the well.

Moses made a great impression upon the daughters of the chief. A man in an Egyptian dress, and with court manners, was not often seen in their vicinity. He was not only dressed like an Egyptian, but he carried himself like a man of culture—he was indeed a prince.

When Jethro's daughters returned home they related the story of the shepherds' unkindness and said that an Egyptian had taken their part and delivered them from the shepherds' hands, and that he had drawn water from the well for their flocks. Jethro then asked what had become of the man, and requested that they go and invite him in to sup with them. Moses accepted the hospitality of Jethro and his family in a most appropriate and pleasing way. The quiet life of these shepherds was very different from the life Moses had led. Yet, the laying aside of a brilliant, active, court life, and the taking up of the life of a shepherd, is recorded in the following simple way: "And Moses was content to dwell with the man." All his restlessness passed away in the presence of this simple family. Jethro was a really great man—his character, his simplicity, and his surroundings were what Moses needed. The two men became great companions. The latter foresaw Jethro's wisdom, cleverness, and caution, and long years after, when he needed counsel and advice, to control and guide the people



whom he was leading out of Egypt, his thoughts naturally reverted to Jethro. We do not wonder at Moses' fondness for him, for he was intellectually great and mature in spiritual life. His faith and power of religious devotion were like Abraham's. Although Moses had been taught in a holy household, yet he had been surrounded by irreligious multitudes who respected neither God nor man. Here, in this quiet place, among these pastoral people, whose faith in the one true God absorbed their lives like the air they breathed, he could dwell in calm.



MOSES AND THE BURNING BUSH.

Moses needed this quiet—he needed these years of meditation and these peaceful conversations with Jethro. He needed, too, the scenes of nature. They greatly impressed him. The mountains at evening and morning arrayed themselves in the moods of the sky. At times the reflection of blue and violet added a softness to the summits, and again the reflection of color gave them a look of dire foreboding. The scene constantly formed one splendid panorama, ever changing, as he walked about with his flocks.

Here Moses remained forty years. He began to look upon the place as home, and adopted the life of the people. He became a

simple herdsman and married a daughter of Jethro by the name of Zipporah. In time a son was born to them. "He called his name Gershom, for he said, I have been a stranger in a strange land." There was at first an underlying current of sadness in his life, as we see in the name of his elder son. It would be pleasant to know that his loneliness, after a time, passed away, and we venture to say it did to some extent, as the name of his second son, Eliezer, which meant, "God is help," would indicate.

His career, which in an hour was broken off from Egypt, was as quickly changed in Midian. It came about as follows: He was walking with his sheep among the mountains one day, when a strange sight met his eyes. If you are familiar with a wooded scene, you will understand that low shrubs grow here and there in clumps. Moses was near now to the Mountain of Horeb. One particular bush attracted his attention. It was full of flame, but it did not burn away. He then approached more closely, and was about to look upon it, when God said, with sudden clearness: "Take off thy shoes from off thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground."

Moses wondered at it all, then, little dreaming that it was a vision, with one gateway opening into heaven and another opening outward to the earth, was afraid and hid his face in his shepherd's cloak. Then God said again: "Come not near this place, for I Am here. I have heard the children of Israel crying, and I remember that I promised Abraham that his children should live in Canaan, and I Am going to send them there. Moses, you must go to Pharaoh and tell him to let them go."

To Moses the task seemed mountain high. The augustness of Pharaoh, his riches, his army, and his power in general, appalled him. He had once attempted to arouse his own people to insurrection and hopelessly failed. The situation, he said, was too much for him. He said it with helplessness and with terror, for he realized its weight. God then said that He would be with him as an offset to the power of Egypt.

Then Moses said: "But perhaps the children of Israel will not choose to come out of Egypt. They will say: We will not go with you, Moses; you are not speaking the truth. What shall I do then?"

God said that He would teach him to do wonderful things. For credentials before Israel he said that he should present the new name of God: "I Am that I Am." Say to Israel: "I Am hath sent me."

Now, Moses had a long stick in his hand, called a rod. He used it to help his sheep out of holes and to lean upon when he climbed high hills. God said: "What do you hold in your hand?" Moses answered: "A rod."

God said: "Throw it upon the ground." Moses did, and it turned into a serpent. He was afraid of it and began to run away.

Then God said: "Take hold of it by the tail." Moses did as God directed, and it turned again into a rod.

God said to Moses: "When you go to Egypt, do this wonderful thing before the children of Israel, to show them that I have sent you; but if they will not believe you, do this thing too that I will show you. Put your hand into your bosom." So Moses put in his hand, and when he pulled it out, it was leprous, that is, it was covered over with white spots. Then God said: "Put your hand in again." This he did, and when he pulled it out it was as well as before. Having been given directions to meet every difficulty, Moses started to the land of Egypt. Previous to this, God had told Moses that Aaron, his brother, should go with him to Pharaoh and speak for him. Aaron could speak well, and loved God.

With a like power did God influence Aaron, who lived in the land of Egypt, to go out and welcome Moses. He did this by speaking to him in an audible voice, or by speaking direct to his mind—perhaps the latter method was used; if so, it was a presentation, going through the mind as a command. God timed their meeting so perfectly that they came face to face at the very place where Moses had received his revelation. Aaron kissed Moses as a recognition of his divinely appointed work, and though Aaron was the elder, he gladly submitted his life and power to his brother, that the will of God regarding the nation might be carried out.

When they came to Egypt, their first act was to gather the officers of the people of Israel together. Aaron told them how God had appeared to Moses and what he now proposed to do. Moses did not have letters, as is usual in such cases, but God had given him signs and the people believed.



The next move Moses and Aaron made was to appear before Pharaoh. The Pharaoh with whom Moses had played as a child was dead. This Pharaoh was a new ruler. His name was Menephtah I. He was a proud and wicked man and worshiped idols. With what feeling of bygone power in behalf of Egypt must Moses have been moved as he stood again before the throne of Pharaoh! But he did not waver. His dream of freedom for his people was before him stronger than ever. Now he was entering on a new battle—a battle in which no army was to move. He and Aaron, as representatives of God, were to plead for the rights of their race. They now became diplomats, asking the rights of freedom and the privilege of departing from the land for the purpose of worshiping the true God.

Do you think Pharaoh would let them go? No; he said: "Who is the Lord that I should obey his voice?" He even drove Moses and Aaron from his presence with insulting words, saying that the people must continue work as heretofore. He said he would even make the situation more intolerable.

Upon receiving this answer from Pharaoh, Moses and Aaron said that the Lord would visit his country with dreadful plagues and that these would fol-



MOSES AND AARON BEFORE PHARAOH.

low one after the other until he gave his consent. But the king would not believe. That Pharaoh should think of the slaves' comfort seemed quite out of the question. His whole life had been spent in gratifying his own selfish ends. He called together his wise men, who cast down rods, which became serpents. The rod of Aaron swallowed the other serpents. As the Egyptians worshiped a serpent, it showed the inferiority of their worship to that of Israel. Jugglers in Egypt to this very day have a strange power of making serpents so stiff and rigid as to appear as if turned to rods.

Scripture says that God then turned the waters of Egypt into blood. This was a blow at the entire religion of Egypt, impressive alike to Pharaoh on the throne and the slave in the hovel. We must remember that God used natural forces as far as was possible in accomplishing his work. The same thing has since occurred. The blood-red appearance of the water was caused by the marvelously quick growth of a minute red plant which filled every space of water with a color as red as blood. God could have turned water into blood had he desired, but it was not necessary when it could be made red by a more natural process.

As Pharaoh would not obey, God sent another plague. Aaron stretched out the rod, and thousands and thousands of frogs came hopping out of the river and out of the ponds. This was a blow at a female deity whose statue was crowned with a frog's head. Her name was Heki, and she was called "The Driver Away of Frogs." In this instance the Lord used another natural event, only, of course, augmenting the numbers. When the Nile rises at the regular flood the moisture quickens frogs and toads into myriads. On this occasion Pharaoh called for Moses and Aaron and said to them: "Pray God to take away the frogs. I will tell the children of Israel to go." Moses went and prayed to God and the frogs died. But then Pharaoh said, "I will not let the people go."

So God sent a third plague, which came without warning. The soil of Egypt, like everything else, was considered sacred. It was called Set, "the father of the gods," and worshiped as such. But now it was to be defiled. Aaron stretched out the rod and it swarmed with little insects which crawled over men and beasts. This also came about by a natural process. The debris which is left at the time of



any preceding overflow becomes powdered, and as the waters advance over it a most extraordinary phenomenon is witnessed—myriads of gnats and flies rise, full formed, and swarm in the air. They, on this occasion, filled the ground and houses and became a specially trying thing to a ceremonially pure people like the Egyptians.

But Pharaoh would not mind this plague. Then God sent a fourth one, which was winged insects—such as flies, cockroaches, beetles and crickets. The flies in Egypt, under ordinary circumstances, are exceeding worrisome. They seem to be mad with hunger. They fill drinking vessels; they cover articles of food. Nothing can exclude them. Curtains even are unavailing. In an ordinary year they swarm by millions; but at this time, however—during this plague, they made Egypt a place of loathing. The beetle, which came also, was deemed the symbol of creative principle. The scarabeus was so sacred as to be carved on every monument, painted on every mummy case. It represented the abiding soul, the immortal life. This plague seemed to strike at the base of life itself. Then Pharaoh said, “I will let you go if God will take away the flies.” Then Moses prayed and



THE ISRAELITES IN BONDAGE.



the flies disappeared. After this, however, Pharaoh said again, "I will not let the people go."

So God sent a fifth plague, which went even deeper into the nation's life. It touched religion in its tenderest spot. The ox and the cow were dedicated to the worship of Isis and Osiris. A great mortality broke out suddenly among cattle, sheep, camels and horses. The whole life of all animals seemed threatened with destruction. The visitation here, as in other cases, showed their supernatural origin in the fact that they visited the Egyptian districts only; wherever the people of God were living, no harm came. To the Egyptians this always proclaimed the story—a punishment of Egypt. Pharaoh, however, would not let the people of Israel go.

The hand of affliction grew steadily heavier, coming nearer and nearer to their own lives. In the sixth plague the people themselves were smitten. This last visitation, though touching their persons, was not less striking in a religious way than the others. It was in a sense more telling. Ashes, the symbol in scripture of the bitter slavery of Egypt, were taken before Pharaoh, lifted up toward heaven and scattered. In Egypt there was a god by the name of Set—he was also called Typhon—to whom were offered red-haired and light-haired people as sacrifices. Some of these were Hebrews—all were foreigners. After the victims had been burned as a sacrifice to this hideous god, the ashes were scattered in the air—the priests who gave the ashes to the wind believed that wherever they went they would drive evil away from the land. This custom was now turned as a punishment. As Moses scattered the ashes, the magicians fled before its burning dust. God made a great many boils come out on all the men, women and children, but not upon the children of Israel. The Egyptians were so sick they could not stand. Yet Pharaoh would not mind, for his heart grew harder and harder. He would not admit defeat, nor could he be persuaded to let the nation go. He was still willing to war against God, he himself being the opponent.

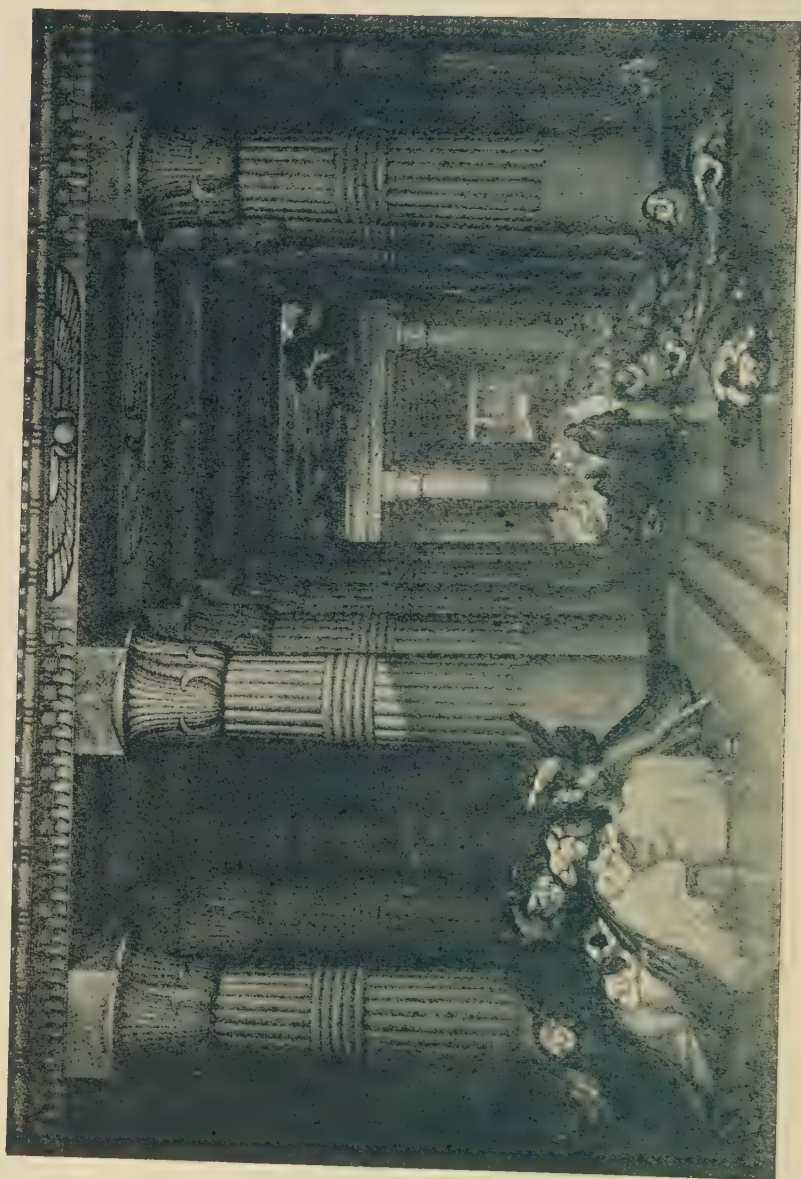
He, however, made a slight concession. He said the men might go to worship. But Moses stood for the freedom of all the people. He would not make any concessions. He demanded that everybody and everything should go—not a hoof should be left behind. The spirit of revolution was on—all must go, even to the last hoof of cattle.

One morning Moses and Aaron went to Pharaoh and said: "Tomorrow God is going to rain great hailstones, such hailstones as were never seen in Egypt before. They will kill all men and beasts that are out of doors." Some of the men of Egypt heard Moses and Aaron say this and believed them. They kept their beasts in the stable. Others, however, did not believe, and let them remain in the field. The flax was blossoming, the barley had come to full ear, the wheat had not yet been touched with gold, and the rye was still green. While the fields were nearing the harvest hour a terrible storm of rain, thunder, lightning and hail swept the air. Rain in Egypt is not uncommon, neither is thunder and lightning; but the hail came, tearing the grain in shreds, which was a great surprise to all. This last punishment was a general visitation on all things. To a devout nation like Egypt the lesson was not lost. It touched the field, river, houses, cattle, beasts and men—nothing was exempt. As each one of these was under the care of some divinity, naturally all the gods were involved in the ruin which had come upon them.

This storm frightened Pharaoh and he sent for Moses and Aaron and said: "Pray the Lord to send no more thunder and hail and I will let the children of Israel go." Moses said: "I will stretch out my hands to God and he will not send any more thunder and hail, but still I know you will not obey God." Then Moses stretched out his hands and God made the hail, thunder and rain leave off.

When Pharaoh saw that the storm was over he would not let the children of Israel go. Then Moses and Aaron went to King Pharaoh and said: "God will now send locusts into your country." Then the eighth plague darkened the sky and covered the land. Locusts everywhere appeared. No green thing was left untouched. They flew in the houses, in the fields, in the lakes, rivers and wells; Pharaoh was humbled. He saw that the children of Israel were untouched by any of these plagues. He was slowly learning that "the earth was the Lord's." He summoned Moses and Aaron, imploring forgiveness and mercy from God. His plea was quickly granted. But his changed heart did not long endure, and he said: "I will not let Israel go."

The next time Moses did not tell Pharaoh what God was going to do. Moses stretched out his rod toward heaven and in a moment God



DEATH OF THE FIRST-BORN.



made it darker than it ever is at night, except where the children of Israel lived. There it was light. The ninth plague descended on the land and in its enfolding embrace the light of the sun seemed to be quenched. The sun was the supreme deity of Egypt. Its chief educational center was rendered sacred by the Temple of the Sun. "The sun hid its face before Jehovah and it was midnight in the land while the hours were yet the hours of day." In such darkness as comes in the day it is singular that light—artificial light—does not seem to illumine space. The people of Egypt were frightened. They were at work when all at once this darkness came on. It lasted three days and three nights and gave them time to think of their wickedness. This awful visitation seemed to weaken the heart of Pharaoh and he sent for Moses and Aaron. But when they said all must go, men, women, children, herds and flocks, he saw that it meant their freedom and he would not let them go. He again hardened his heart. He said to Moses: "Go away, you shall never see my face again."

On the doomed land a final bolt now fell. God spoke to Moses again and said: "I am going to send another plague. At night I shall come into every house in Egypt and kill the eldest son, but this is what I desire the children of Israel to do. Let each man take a lamb, kill it and eat it to-night with his family, and let him take the blood of the lamb and put the blood outside the door, and when I pass I shall see the blood and I will not kill the eldest son in that house. Let the people in the house stand around the table while they eat the lamb; let them all be dressed ready for a journey."

So all the children of Israel did as the Lord requested. They stood around their tables with walking-sticks in their hands; they put blood on the posts of the door, for then they knew they were safe. The men of Egypt went to bed that night as usual. But at midnight Jehovah smote all the first-born in the land of Egypt, from the first-born of Pharaoh that sat on the throne to the first-born of the captive that was in the dungeon, even to the first-born of the cattle. And Pharaoh rose up in the night, he and all his servants, and all the Egyptians, and there was a great cry in Egypt, for there was not a house where there was not one dead. And he called for Moses and Aaron by night and said: "Rise up and get you forth from among my people, both ye and the children of Israel, and go serve Jehovah as ye have said. Also

take your herds and your flocks as ye have said, and be gone, and bless me also."

Thus, in the dead of night, amid his dead, the king gave an emancipation proclamation which restored the Jew to his own right, land and liberty. The proud king, looking through his tear-blinded eyes, said to them: "Bless me also." Underneath his pride there was a heart, a heart which had been touched at last. He knew now that he was not a god, and felt the need of an arm which could support and bless him.

There stands a monument in Egypt. It is a statue of Menephtah. Underneath is engraved his own name, as well as his son's name, who was associated with him in the rule of the land. He is recorded as the departed one, and the terms of endearment show the father's heart.

Moses and Aaron departed from the presence of the king in the night. The Israelites had been ordered to place the blood on the lintel of the door. When the angel saw that sign he passed over, and thus the house was saved. The word "Passover" became the name attached to the great feast in commemoration of the angel passing over their home.

An incident of that night relates that a sick girl said: "Father, is the blood sprinkled on the lintel?" He said it was. But she said: "Father, take me in your arms, carry me to the door, that I may see the lintel." He bore her in his arms to the open door, and when he lifted her up in the dark that she might see the sign, she lay back in his arms satisfied, for she knew the angel would not stay, but would pass over.

So that strange night drew toward morning. The king asking for a blessing, the sorrow of a nation, the moving of a great host, were the salient features. Israel moved on its outward way, bound for Canaan's happy land by Jordan's shore. The slaving was over, but the long journey was just begun. The fall of their foot is the music of freedom.

## CHAPTER XX

### MOSES; OR FROM EGYPT TO THE HEIGHTS OF SINAI

THE sunlight, falling next morning with such an indescribable charm upon all things, seemed to predict joy and prosperity to the Israelites. Their journey as they marched out of Egypt was of necessity very slow. They could

not go faster than the children and lambs could walk, and as there were many of both, only a little distance could be compassed each day.

Ten solid weeks were given them to make preparation for the journey. This was greatly needed, for continued tent life was, as it is to-day,

fraught with many trials.

Tent cords did not prove everlasting; pegs would not

hold to every ground; poles became rotten and worn; food and clothing

ruined; inconveniences and sickness had

to be planned for. Besides, the people had to be arranged in tribes under command of a leader.

Let us also remember that while Moses was being trained in a



GATHERING OF  
THE CHILDREN  
OF ISRAEL.

had to be provided; inconveniences and sickness had to be planned for. Besides, the people had to be arranged in tribes under command of a leader.



desert place, Aaron, his brother, and Miriam, his sister, were fostering that national idea for which Moses had struck. Moses had come back to a people thoroughly educated to thoughts of nationality. This does not appear on the surface, but thoughtful study reveals it. It is like brushing the silent soil from buried monuments to read the face inscriptions.

The children of Israel now began their journey to Canaan; they had to travel a long and unknown road before they could reach it, but God showed them the way. He went before them in a dark cloud. The cloud moved, and they moved after it. But a black cloud could not be seen at night, so at night God made the cloud shine like fire. When the cloud or the fire stopped, then Moses told all the people to set up their tents on the ground. As soon as the cloud moved, the people folded up their tents, placed them on the backs of their camels, and went on their journey.

When the people started they set out with high hopes of entering the "Promised Land" soon. They had no thought of the long journey. But it was impossible to lead them direct against warlike tribes. Had they been told this in the beginning, they would not have undertaken the journey. The point was to get them out of Egypt early and with as little loss as possible. Bit by bit the plan was shown them.

Many of the Israelites were on terms of friendliness with the Egyptians. The Egyptian poor and even some of the wealthy had felt the tyranny of kings, and hence were in sympathy with the Hebrew people. The Jews were mostly very poor. No wages had been given them. The gifts of the friendly Egyptians to the Israelites for the journey were more than generous. They even robbed themselves in their desire to see them depart in comfort. This could not have been done in a night of sorrow. We are also told that many Egyptians, preferring freedom to tyranny, journeyed with them.

The first step which they took as a nation was to change their calendar. Everything with them dated from the night of the nation's birth, from the time that Jehovah led them forth to life.

As they looked on the land they perceived that the wheat was earing, so the month was called Abib, or "earring." It was near our April. The Egyptian calendar began with the rise of the Nile, but the Israelites preferred to count time from their deliverance.

God said to Moses: "The children of Israel must never forget my kindness in bringing them out of Egypt. They must eat a lamb every year, as they have done to-night. Eating the lamb shall be called eating the "Passover," because God passed over the doors where the blood was seen.

Although the Israelites had been accustomed with all nations to hold a spring festival, this they now changed to a higher thought. On



THE DEPARTURE OF ISRAEL FROM EGYPT.

the tenth of the month a lamb one year old, without blemish, was selected for sacrifice. Four days later, in the moments between sunset and starlight, each family in the congregation slayed the victim and sprinkled the blood on the door-post. It was then roasted entire. Any part not eaten was burned the following day. This feast was a feast between Jehovah and Israel and commemorated forever the night of their birth as a nation. There was also a second feast, that of unleavened bread, signifying the same great fact.

After starting, the Israelites marched as rapidly as possible for fifty miles, hardly resting till they had placed this distance between them



MOSES COMMANDING THE WATER TO RETURN AFTER THE PASSAGE OF THE CHILDREN OF ISRAEL THROUGH THE RED SEA.



and the borders of Egypt. They were now close to the Red Sea at a spot called Pihahiroth—"the place where the reeds grow!" Here they found meadows and springs of abundant water. They had come around the frontier wall, escaped conflict with the troops, and were happy in a place of rest close by the present town of Suez. Here the cloud stopped and they set up their tents close by the sea.

They had not been long in their tents before they heard a great noise of wheels and horses. They looked, and saw a great way off a host of soldiers in chariots and on horses. Pharaoh had been sorry that he had let them go, and sent a portion of his splendid army in pursuit. The Egyptians had learned in conflict with the Hittites the value and use of chariots, and had sent them as the best means of conquering Moses and his followers. The Israelites were frightened. They could not get over the sea, for they had no ships; yet if they stayed where they were, Pharaoh's men would soon overtake them. What could they do? They had not as yet learned that they could wholly trust God, and rebuked Moses for leading them away. In return, he, who had been taught meekness, said, "Do not be afraid. God will fight for you."

Then Moses prayed to God; for he knew that God would save them. God told him to lift up his rod over the sea. So Moses lifted up his rod and the waters separated, making a path for the people to cross.

It was evening when they began to cross the sea, yet it was not dark, because the cloud in the sky shone brightly and gave light. God did not choose that Pharaoh's men should see the light, so he made the bright cloud move backward, and it stood in the sky between the Israelites and Pharaoh. Pharaoh's hosts were in the dark, and on this account could not go rapidly; but the Israelites walked quickly along and by morning were on the other side of the sea. They had not yet reached Canaan, but they had crossed the sea and were on their journey to the Promised Land.

Let us remember that in this case, as with the plagues, God accomplished his purpose through natural means. At the point where Israel struck the tongue of the Red Sea, it becomes possible to wade at ebb tide. In this instance of God's protection, the night opened with great darkness and storm; the wind blew strong from the northeast.

This piled the waters up like a wall beyond the sand banks, leaving a wide space for Israel to pass over dry shod. All was so quiet that the Egyptians were deceived. They felt that the army of Israel was not moving. The soft sand gave no sound, and whatever might have been revealed in the quiet night was hidden in the dark and muffled by the storm.

When Pharaoh and his men came to the edge of the sea, they saw the dry path over which Israel had just crossed, and unmindful of the coming change in the wind, they plunged into the sinking sand. They had gone about half-way across when they heard dreadful noises. The weight of horses and chariots, and the oncoming waves, whose warring they had heard, made confusion. The army lost discipline and became a mob. They could not go on and so they said to each other: "Let us turn back." But it was too late. The great walls of water fell down upon them and all were drowned in the midst of the sea.

This loss of men, together with that of the exodus of Israel, rendered Egypt so weak that she gradually fell to pieces; even her cities set up independent governments. Anarchy reigned for a season till it spent itself, then order was again restored.

The redemption of Israel had come in such a striking manner that it made the nation delirious with joy. There on the shore overlooking the glittering sea, they sang that magnificent ode which has come down through the years of time. Nay, it has ascended to heaven itself, for St. John, in the Book of Revelation, in speaking of the redeemed in heaven, says they sing the song of Moses and the Lamb. On this occasion the people divided themselves into two choruses—the men in one, the women in another—and with one voice chanted the mighty chant which was resounded by all the warriors of God.

Here the Israelites rested by the green meadows. They needed to rest, for God saw that they needed disciplining.

Their journey entailed trust in God—deep trust. They were now in a very large wilderness. There were no men nor houses, but there were lions and bears, which roared and howled; there were serpents that bit, and scorpions that stung; there were no rivers nor brooks, but there were high hills and dark pits. There were scarcely any fruit-trees or corn-fields, so that there was very little to eat; and the Israelites could not sow grain nor plant fruit-trees, because they were traveling.

There was such a number of people that they needed a great deal of food; the little bread they had taken from Egypt was soon eaten up, and they feared starvation.

But God loved them and would not forget them. Again they rebelled and went to Moses and said: "We wish we had died in Egypt. We there had bread, as much as we could eat; but now we shall starve." Moses did not answer roughly. He knew that God heard their words, and would provide.

Next morning, when they looked out of their tent-doors, they saw little round white things on the ground. They said to each other: "What can this be? We never saw anything like it before." Then Moses said: "This is the bread that God has sent you from heaven; gather it, and take it to your tents."

So the men got baskets and gathered it for their wives and children; there was enough for all. They found it sweet as honey, and called it "manna."

It was very wholesome—more fit for angels than for men to eat, because it came from heaven. God sent it very early, and every one was obliged to get up early and gather it, because when the sun was hot it melted away. Moses said to them: "Do not save any of it, for God will send you some every day. If it is all gone at night, do not be afraid; trust God. He will send you more." But some of the people chose to save some of it. Next morning they found it was full of worms. In this way God taught them to trust him. The life of faith has its Elim after Marah, its manna when bread fails. Faith is more than all else. We must remember that manna need not be supplied always; it is supplemental.

Soon after, the people had no water to drink. There was no river in the wilderness, and very few wells or ponds. The Israelites thought God would let them and their herds die of thirst. So they went to Moses and spoke very angrily. He did not answer but began to pray. Then God said to Moses: "Take your rod, and go up a hill, and let some of the people go with you. Then when you are come to a high place, close by a rock, strike the rock and water shall come out." So Moses took some people with him and struck the rock, and water came running out. All drank and were filled. But this proved to be an hour of peril. The Israelites, having fallen into a passion, were like the waters



which rage during a tempest. All was confusion. This was a time when they needed calmness and bravery. The fierce Amalekites, a wandering nation, came with a rush to conquer them. In the fierce battle which followed Israel won, but won only through Moses, who held aloft his rod. The gifted genius of Joshua and the valor of Caleb would have availed nothing except for Moses, who stood as God's representative.

The value of this battle as a lesson is voiced in Psalm cv: "Not unto us, not unto us, O Lord, but unto Thy great and holy name be all the praise."



THE GATHERING OF "MANNA."

The Amalekites left a wound that only time could heal. They had battled against Israel without reason, and this was looked upon as an attack against the throne of God:

"Because his hand is against the throne of Jehovah, therefore God has war with Amalek from generation to generation," said Moses to the people. They attacked the Israelites in a true Arab fashion. They "met them in the way and had smitten the hindmost, even all that were feeble, behind the host," but God gave the victory to Moses.



MOSES STRUCK THE ROCK AND WATER CAME RUNNING OUT.

Going onward, the Israelites came to quarries where prisoners were working. Many of these were exiles from home and sentenced to a hard and bitter service. Among them were Hebrews from Egypt, who had rebelled against forced tasks and brutal treatment, and who for this pretense of treason had been sent as slaves to foreign quarries and mines. These they set free.

Upon reaching Midian at last, Moses found great joy in meeting his wife and children and the old associates with whom he had dwelt for forty years. Here he again met Jethro, to whom he related all that had happened. The people now held worship, after which Moses, Aaron and the Elders of Israel sat down with Jethro in a feast of friendship, which was ratified by all the Hebrews and by all the tribe over which Jethro ruled. Jethro now pointed out to Moses that he (meaning Moses) could not endure the strain of work and worry which daily arose from disputes of so many people, and suggested that a number of judges be appointed, to whom could be referred all matters of contention. After this, Jethro returned to his own tribe.

It was now three months since the Israelites had started on their journey. They had come one hundred and fifty miles. They had only stopped on the way for rest and for refreshments. They now pitched their tents near the mountain known as the Sacred Mountain, where they were to remain for eleven months while they organized themselves into a nation.

The tents were located in a space called "the palm of the hand." Moses, no doubt, when first called to the work, selected this as a stopping place for his people, knowing it contained many streams, glens and gorges.

No place more fit could have been chosen for the completing of those things to which their attention was now called. The mountain had two prominent peaks, one called Horeb, meaning "the dry"; another Sinai, meaning "the jagged." The air was clear and bracing, for the plain was four thousand feet above sea level; water and pasture were abundant.

The account given in the Book of Exodus of their work of organization into a nation with God as their king, is grand, and more than grand; it is sublime beyond expression.

Up to this point, the cloud, the symbol of God's presence, had gone before the host; now it settled on Sinai. God told Moses to come up to the top of the mountain, for he had something to say to him. So Moses went up, then God said: "You see how kind I have been to the children of Israel in bringing them out of Egypt; go down and ask them whether they will do what I command them; if they will, they shall always be my people." He came down with this message, that if they would obey God they should enjoy the "peculiar" privilege of being God's people. To this they assented gratefully, but with awe.

Then Moses went up to the top of the mountain again and told God the people would do all that He commanded. Then God said: "I am going to let the people hear My voice, and they shall see Me speaking to you. Go down and tell them to get ready." So Moses went down and said: "In three days you will hear God's voice, and see Him in a cloud at the top of the mountain. Get ready."

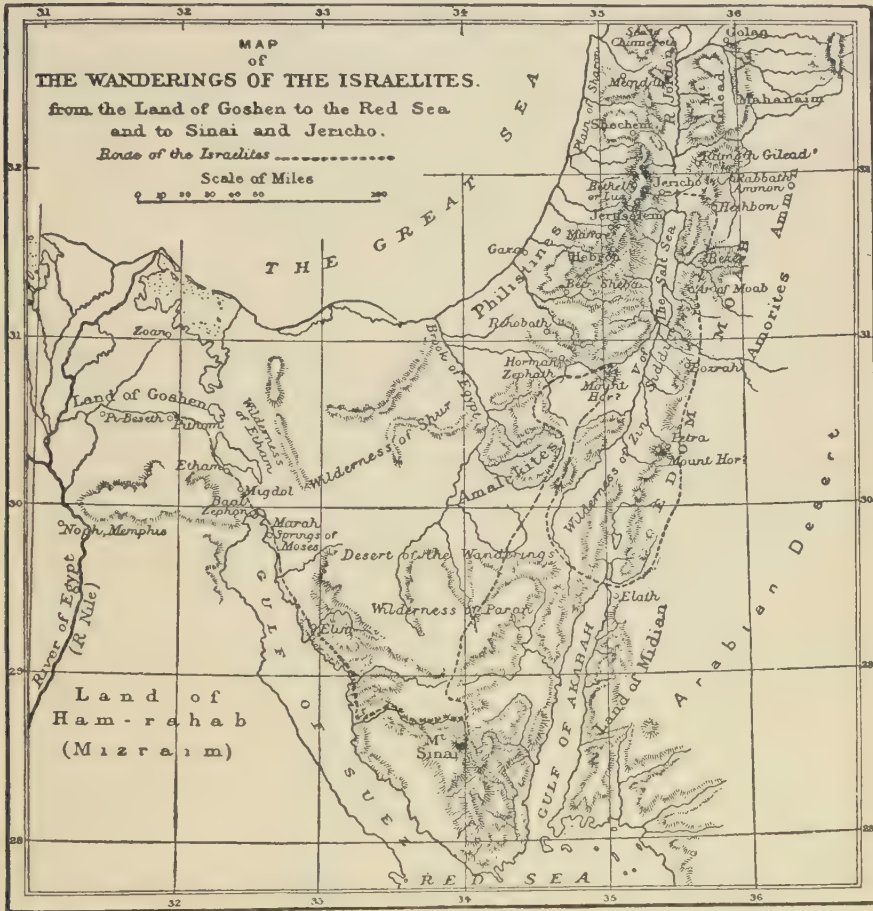
So the people washed their clothes, that they might all stand in clean linen before the Lord. Moses desired men to put rails all round the mount, that no one might go up or even touch it; even the sheep must not eat the grass, for it was the mount of God.

In three days, early in the morning, the people heard a loud voice. Moses desired them to come out of their tents, and to look upon God.

What a wonderful sight they saw! The mountain was shaking.



On the top a great fire was seen, and smoke went up so dense as to fill the sky with blackness. There were thunders and lightnings, and a sound came out of the fire like the sound of a trumpet, and every moment it grew louder and louder. Even Moses himself was frightened, and said: "I tremble, and am afraid." The Lord said to Moses:



"Come up to Me on the top of the mount." So Moses went up, and all the people saw him go. Then God said to him: "Go tell the people not to come up after you, for they must not come up this mountain." And Moses said: "I have put rails round the mount." But still God said: "Go and tell them not to come near."

So Moses went down and said: "Do not touch the mountain." Then God spoke very loud indeed, so that all the people heard. The

opening words were tender and fatherly. He then proceeded to give laws for the life of the nation and the individual in every avenue of human existence.

These are, in substance, God's words: "I am the Lord, thy God, that brought thee out of the land of Egypt.

- I. Thou shalt have no other gods before me.
- II. Thou shalt not make images, and worship them.
- III. Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord, thy God, in vain.
- IV. Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy.
- V. Honor thy father and thy mother.
- VI. Thou shalt not kill.
- VII. Thou shalt not commit adultery.
- VIII. Thou shalt not steal.
- IX. Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.
- X. Thou shalt not covet."

God then told the Israelites if they obeyed Him, He would send the Angel of Jehovah to lead and guide them. He then told Moses to come up to Him quite alone, and to stay with Him at the top of the mountain. So Moses stayed with God forty days and forty nights, and all that time he neither ate bread nor drank water; but God kept him alive, and talked to him out of the thick cloud. At the end of the time God gave Moses a book. It was not made of paper, but of stone. It had only two leaves, and on those leaves God had written all the words He had spoken in the loud voice from the cloud. The "ten things" God had told the Israelites are called the "ten commandments." He had written them down that Moses might read them again and again to the children of Israel, that they might never forget them. Strange as it may seem, and notwithstanding the second commandment, "Thou shalt not make graven images and worship them," during the absence of Moses, the Israelites pressed Aaron to furnish them with a visible sign of Jehovah. He succumbed to the pressure and formed for them a *golden calf*. The people in Egypt worshiped calves, and so he chose *that* animal for them to worship. They then began to praise it, and say: "This is he who brought us out of Egypt." Then Aaron put it on a high place, and built an altar before it, and said that they would have a great feast next day.

The next day they rose up early, took their lambs and goats, and offered them on the altar, and then rose up to sing. The feast was coincident with the return of Moses and Joshua. Joshua, with a soldier's instinct, said, as he heard the cries of the people at the feast, "It is the voice of them who go forth to battle." But Moses, with a truer instinct, said: "It is the song of a feast and the cry of those who rejoice."

When Moses saw what had happened, he cast down the tables on which the commandments were written, for the people had broken the covenant. Immediately all was confusion. God's presence as manifested by the cloud dwelt apart from the camp. It was only after long and earnest prayer that the people were reinstated.

But this defection left its permanent mark on the nation. Some leadership in behalf of the true God was needed. A priesthood was formed to take charge of, and to educate the people. The tribe of Levi was chosen. A legend runs like this: "When Jacob fled from his father's house to Mesopotamia, and a divine vision had promised



MOSES IN THE MOUNTAIN.



him a splendid future, he vowed that if the Almighty would protect him, keep him from sinful deeds and restore him in peace to his home, he would consecrate a tenth of all that he had to God. Returning from Syria rich in goods and herds, the pious father, true to his vow, separated a tenth of all he possessed to a holy end. But the angel who appeared to him at Mahanaim asked him, 'Thinkest thou, Jacob, that thou hast quite fulfilled thy vow? Know that the Lord claims not mere worldly gifts alone. Thou hast more than ten sons and thou hast not yet tithed *them* to God. Wishest thou not to consecrate one of them to His service?' And Jacob did forthwith as the angel counseled. Counting from Benjamin, the tenth was Levi, and on him fell the lot to be holy to the eternal, and therefore was *he* chosen for the priesthood."

At God's request, Moses again went with God upon the mount. God showed him how to make a beautiful house, which was to be "the house of God."

Then Moses called the people and said: "God commands you to do no work on the Sabbath day, but to worship Him, and He is going to have a house made, where you can come and pray to Him. This house is to be called the Tabernacle."

You remember that the women of Egypt had given them a great deal of gold, and silver, and cloth, and linen. They had made a calf with some of their gold, but they had a great deal more besides. Some of the rich men had beautiful shining stones, and sweet spices, and oil; they brought them all to Moses as gifts toward building a house for the worship of God.

Moses said: "God has made two of your company very skillful in cutting stones, in carving wood, and in making all kinds of curious things, and He has told me their names."

Then Moses called these two men and told them to teach the others. The house of worship was not to be made of brick nor stone, because it must be moved from one place to another, and hence could not be fastened to the ground. It was to be made like a tent. When the house was completed it had two rooms. There stood in the middle of the first one an altar of gold; but no lamps burned upon it, only sweet spices, called "incense." On one side there was a golden table, and on the table twelve loaves, called the shew-bread, or holy bread.

Fresh bread was put there every Sabbath day. On the opposite side of the room there was a golden candlestick with seven lamps. There was no window in the tabernacle, but these lamps made it light. This room was very beautiful, but there was another still more beautiful. It was the inner room—called the Holy of Holies. There was a curtain, or thick veil, between the large and the small room.

In the little room was a golden box, with golden angels on the top.



WORSHIPING THE GOLDEN CALF.

This box was called The Ark. Inside the box the new book of stone was placed. This room was made glorious by God's presence. He used to come down in His cloud and fill it with His brightness. The top of the box was called the mercy-seat, because God sat there, and God is full of love and mercy.

It had no window in it, and no candle, yet it was light. The glory of God made it light, for God, you know, is brighter than the sun. God would not allow any person but Aaron to go into the Holy of Holies, and he was allowed to go in only once a year.

This tabernacle was to serve with the priesthood for a visible mark of God's presence. It was made complete, with altars, both of incense and offerings; with lamps, tongs, and paraphernalia.

God did not leave the senses to be drawn away by weaker things,

but substituted that which would lead them to Him. Here the singers chanted and the trumpets sounded, while cymbals and harp rang forth His praise.

When the tabernacle was completed, Aaron and his sons were consecrated to the priesthood. In performing the ceremony Moses said: "Fill your hand to-day with a gift to Jehovah; consecrate yourselves to His service; your fidelity will bring down a blessing on you. Henceforward you shall be devoted forever to Him alone." The ceremonies occupied seven days. On the eighth they performed the rites of their office. But almost as soon as set apart, the two sons of Aaron offered "strange fire," and were punished for the offense. It is supposed that they offered incense kindled from a source other than that taken from the fire on the altar.

Just a year had elapsed since they had come out of Egypt, a great crowd of fugitives, and the Passover was celebrated in remembrance. Now they were a compact people, with law and leaders; they had a tabernacle, service, and priesthood; they possessed civil government. A census was taken, and, not counting the tribe of Levi, there were 603,550 men. This gave them a grand total of between two and three millions of people.

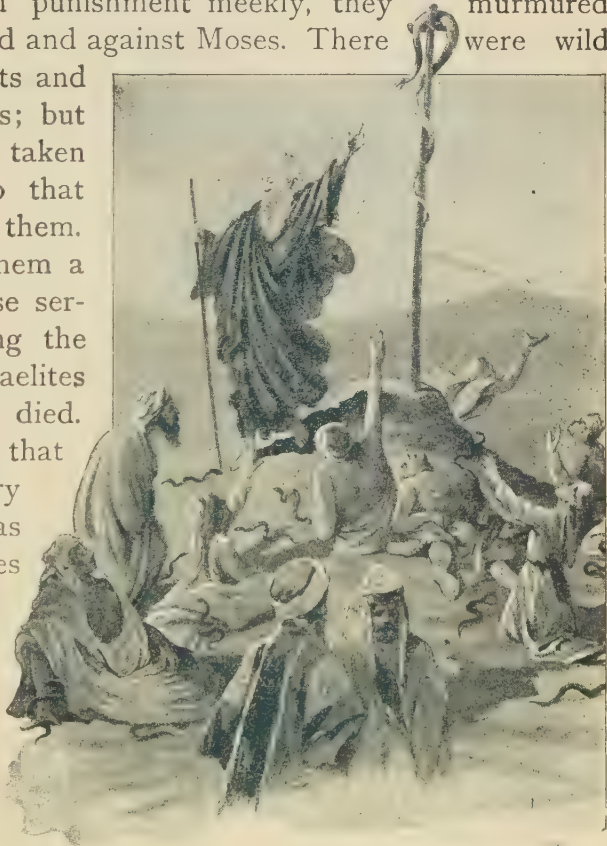
Up to this time no nation in the world had been free from idolatry; no nation was dedicated to the service of the one true God. But now these people were consecrated. Jehovah was their God, and they would obey His commandments. A new era had come to mankind.



## CHAPTER XXI

### MOSES; OR THE VIEW FROM THE HEIGHTS OF PISGAH

THE last stages of the wanderings of the children of Israel are wrapped in obscurity and uncertainty. The march from Sinai to Kadesh and from Kadesh to Moab is quite clear, however. With all this outer confusion there is a spiritual correspondence. The children of Israel traveled in the wilderness a great many years. Sometimes when they were close to Canaan, the cloud moved the other way, and they were obliged to continue traveling in the wilderness. Instead of bearing the discipline and punishment meekly, they murmured again and again against God and against Moses. There were wild beasts and horrible serpents and scorpions in the wilderness; but God up to this time had taken care of the Israelites, so that they were not hurt by them. Now, however, to teach them a severe lesson, God let these serpents come rushing among the tents. Many of the Israelites were bitten, grew sick, and died. There was no medicine that could cure these bites; every person who was bitten was sure to die. The Israelites came to Moses, and said: "We have sinned; we have spoken against the Lord, and against you; pray to the Lord to take the serpents from us." The Lord heard Moses' prayer, and did more than Moses



MOSES AND THE BRAZEN SERPENT.

asked; for He not only called away the serpents, but He told Moses how to cure the people who were bitten. He said: "Take some brass, and make it into the image of a serpent, and put it on a pole, and tell the people who are bitten to look at it; and those who look shall be made well."

Moses believed God. He took some brass, put it in the fire to make it soft, and then made it like one of the fiery serpents, placed it on a pole, and lifted it up where every one could see it. He called to the sick people to look quickly at the serpent and be made well. The people looked and their pain went away; they could walk and praise God.

This fact has ever remained the center of a great truth, not only in the Jewish church, but is imbedded in the New Testament by the words of Jesus to Nicodemus: "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish but have everlasting life." The fact that it lies so deep in the life, thought and literature of the nation shows how profoundly it affected the spiritual imagination of Israel.

This emblem became so estranged from its original intention that Hezekiah considered it wise to destroy it. His word concerning it has raised many discussions in the minds of the people of to-day, but the two diverse opinions may be combined in one. He called it "Nehushtan." Some say he did this in derision. One meaning of "Nehushtan" is "brass." In this case it would mean that he thought they paid homage to brass. Another meaning of "Nehushtan" is "divination." If it led to divination, or a form of fortune-telling, he thought it was time to destroy it. Both meanings can be combined when we say: "Divine honors were paid to brass, therefore it was best that it should be destroyed."

From this place they could see the tops of the high hills that were in Canaan, and they wished to know what sort of a land it was, and what sort of people lived in it. So the Israelites asked Moses to send some men to look at the land, and to come back and tell what kind of a place it was.

Moses waited to know whether God would like to have him do this. Soon God said to Moses: "Send twelve men into Canaan to see

*MOSES; OR THE VIEW FROM THE HEIGHTS OF PISGAH*

the land; see whether there are many people there, and what kind of people they are; whether they are strong or weak; see whether there are many trees, and much corn and grass. Bring back some fruit and show the kind of fruit that grows." So the twelve spies set out on their journey. They walked up and down the hills, and by the side of the water. They saw sweet gardens, and fields covered with sheep, and fields full of corn, and trees laden with fruit, and they saw holes in the trees, which the bees had filled with honey. They saw large towns with high walls around them, and they saw many strong men. When they came back, their people saw the grapes which they brought. There were no such grapes in the wilderness. The spies then said: "The land of Canaan is a fine land, full of milk and honey; but we cannot get into it, for the people live in great towns with high walls; they are very strong, and some of them are giants."

Then the children of Israel said: "We shall be killed if we try to get in." It was wicked to say this, because God had promised to help them.

Two of the spies were very good men; their names were Joshua and Caleb. They did not wish to frighten the people; and Caleb stood up and said: "Let us go into the land, for we can conquer the people that are in it." But the other ten spies said: "No, we cannot, because the people of Canaan are stronger than we." The Israelites cried all night long, and said: "Oh, that we had died in the wilderness!" At last they said: "Let us go back into Egypt."

They knew that Moses would not take them back, and so they



JESUS AND NICODEMUS.



said: "We can make another man captain, and he will take us back." When Moses and Aaron heard these wicked words they were full of grief.

Then Joshua and Caleb said to the people: "We have seen the land and it is beautiful; if we trust in God, he will help us. The people of Canaan have no God to help them; therefore we ought not to be afraid." God spoke to Moses, and said: "How long will this people provoke me? They shall not come into Canaan; only their children shall come in. They shall stay in the wilderness forty years. But there are two of the men who shall go into Canaan; they are Caleb and Joshua." How sad it was for the people to think that they should never see that sweet land of Canaan, but must die in the wilderness! Yet

they deserved a severe punishment, because they had not believed God. And so the children of Israel lived in the wilderness a great many years.



MOSES SENDING SPIES TO THE LAND OF CANAAN.

At last they came to Kadesh, a place where there was no water, and again murmured against Moses and Aaron, as they always did when they were unhappy. They forgot that it was because of their own wickedness that they were still in the wilderness; if they had obeyed God they would then have been sitting under their own fruit trees in Canaan. God said to Moses and Aaron: "Take the rod and call the people, and go to the rock and *speak* to it, and water shall come out of the rock." Moses and Aaron felt very angry with the

people, and they said: "Hear now, ye rebels" (which means *murmurers*), "must we fetch water for you out of this rock?"

Then Moses lifted up his hand and *struck* the rock twice with his rod; and the water came flowing out in streams, and the people and the cattle began to drink.

Do you think that Moses and Aaron had behaved right? God had said: "*Speak* to the rock." God loved Moses and Aaron; yet He must punish them for doing wrong. He would forgive them and take them to heaven, but He must give them some punishment while on earth. Soon after, God said to Moses and Aaron, "Because you have done this, you shall not go into Canaan; but die in the wilderness."

What a great punishment this was! Moses had often longed to see that good land of Canaan; he had often wished to see the Israelites happy in their own houses and gardens; he had longed to see the place where Abraham had built altars and worshiped God; and now he must die in the wilderness.

Kadesh-Barnea was a "Holy Place" before the advent of Israel. This city was near, or identified with, Petra in Edom. Here is a great sandstone cliff, with a romantic ravine, through which runs a clear stream of water, giving life and fertility to the land about Petra. This stream bears the name of Moses, and is the scene of the gift of water "to Israel and their beasts when Israel murmured." From the strife that was there it is called Meribah Kadesh, or "strife and sanctity."

But there are other things to make this scene immortal. It is said to be the place where Miriam died. Up the steep steps of one of the cliffs, in an inner chamber, guides will show you the place where this great woman was buried. Her death was the first break in the great group which had planned and so far carried out the deliverance of Israel. No one, not even Moses, had more influence over the nation than this great woman.

Here also Aaron passed away. Mount Hor, in the vicinity of Petra, is his place of interment. There on the great natural altar he breathed his life away. The two brothers, Moses and Aaron, accompanied by Aaron's eldest son, touchingly climbed the heights together. There on the lonely height the robes of priesthood were taken from the dying man and placed on Eleazar, who became his successor. Here

Aaron looked upon the Promised Land, then closed his eyes, and his work upon earth was over. There beneath the shadows of Hor the nation mourned for thirty days. In the cliff of Petra, Miriam slept. On Mount Hor, Aaron, disrobed of official garments, turned his silent face to the stars. The Israelites were now under the rule of the only remaining member of the house of Amram, Moses, the youngest of the three.

From this time and this place on the incidents and the path of the Israelites' journey come more plainly into view. They went up the



THE RETURN OF THE SPIES.

Arabah to the head of the Gulf of Akabah, an arm of the Red Sea, then to Elath, the place which Solomon years afterwards made his marine port. Now skirting Edom, they arrived in that territory which became their home for some

time and which was incorporated into the national domain.

This land was composed of both pasture land and forest, and was on the east of the Jordan. When they had crossed the water-course of the willows, on the desert's edge, they came to the river Arnon, the only natural river they had seen in their whole journey after leaving the Nile. They here manifested the first sign of a desire for permanent life. They dugged a well, naming it "The Well of Heroes."

There were several wars carried on here, which may be suitably left to the time of Joshua; we will, though, mention one of the incidents which is coincident with the days of Moses.

Running parallel with his life is the fascinating yet sad history of a prophet by the name of Balaam. Balaam was widely known from the desert of Midian to Assyria. He was a warrior prophet and regarded by all the people in the above territory as one whose blessing or curse was of importance. He was treated by God as one who was truly inspired



even though outside the ranks of the chosen people. He was a teacher in the universal church which God has regarded and marked in every age. He was once self-deceived. This self-deception is as finely portrayed as the incidents of a drama. He little realized when he stood with his foot on the ladder of so worldly an ambition that it would come so far short of fulfillment.

He had a pure form of religion but an inferior standard. He worshiped God and obeyed him, but not from the highest motives. A demonstration of the two, throws an interest over his life which time cannot destroy. The preparation which precedes the circumstance is like the opening acts of an indefinable tragedy. The people of Moab with their king gathered with the chiefs of Midian to consider means whereby they might rid themselves of Israel, who was now at their very borderland. The King of Moab in speaking of the powerful Israelitish nation said: "Now shall this company lick up all that are round about us, as the ox licketh up the grass in the field."

Messengers were sent from Moab to Assyria, with presents and invitations to Balaam to come and speak regarding Israel. Balaam consulted God, who first refused, then permitted him to go. We are told that on the way he met an angel, with drawn sword, which filled his mind with foreboding.

Preserved to us by Micah we have the sentiments of Balaam set forth, also the words revealed by the King of Moab. The latter asked him if it would have any influence on keeping Israel away if he should offer his first-born as a sacrifice to God. How magnificent was Balaam's reply: "He hath showed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the Lord require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?"

The description of the first interview between the prophet and the king lends striking interest to the method of their worship, where, in the clouds of incense, each one alone, then both together, sought to overcome their conscience and the voice of God. But they failed, as the prophet stated they would at first.

Onward they went, up the mountain, to the place which was dedicated to Baal. Up above all, to the peaks of Pisgah, climbed the prophet and the king. Here a vision appeared to Balaam. Close to the encampment of Israel, he saw flowing streams giving life to the desert.

Here also he saw a mighty lion couching amidst the thickets and underneath the trees on the mountains of Judah. He saw also a wild bull, coming out from the bowmen of Ephraim, trampling its enemies and piercing them through with the famous arrows of the tribe. The scene shifted, and in the distance he "saw, but not now,"—he "beheld, but not nigh," a "star come out of Jacob and a scepter rise out of Israel." Again the scene shifted, and looking on the surrounding nations he saw them fall one by one before the arms of Israel and before the star which came out of Bethlehem. Here the vision widened,—a storm broke—his own beloved land Assyria became involved against Israel: "Assur shall carry thee away captive." In the twinkling of an eye another scene burst upon his vision and he cried: "Alas, who shall live when God doeth this?" His own land was overtaken by tempests, the destruction of which is revealed in the following words: "For ships shall come from the coast of Chittim and shall crush Assur and shall crush Eber, and he also shall perish forever."

Just now Europe was beginning to rise on the political horizon, and while she was not exactly feared, the question with Eastern potentates was, what would her power amount to? This vision marks the overpowering spirit of God compelling Balaam to bless where he had intended to besiege. From the vision he rose as by force, and through the power of God blessed Israel in the presence of the king. Here the King of Moab and Balaam parted: "And Balaam rose up and went and returned to his own place," and the King of Moab returned to his people.

As Moses approached the end of life his characteristics became changed. Formerly he had been prominent as a lawgiver; now he became eminent in prophetic power as well. One prophecy is addressed to the tribes. In it God is called the "Rock," and Israel is not only asked to look back upon memories of the desert, but to look beyond the desert to the other side of the Jordan—"the butter of kine and milk of sheep, with fat of lambs and rams of the breed of Bashan, and goats with the fat of kidneys of wheat."

In another Psalm God is contrasted with the fleeting life of man and the mountains. "Before ever these mountains were brought forth." This funeral hymn of Moses has been used as a burial service for multitudes of people, and becomes *the* funeral hymn of all ages.

The Israelites were soon to go into Canaan, but Moses was not to go there with them. Moses had written a great many books; and now he had almost finished them. He had written about how God made the world, how Adam ate the fruit, how Cain killed Abel. He had written about Noah and Abraham and Isaac and Jacob; he had written about Joseph and his brethren; he had written about himself; how he had been saved from the water when a babe. He had written about the "Ten Plagues" and the "Ten Commandments" and the "Tabernacle"; he had written about his own sin.



ROCK-CUT TEMPLE PETRA, IN EDM.

All that I have told you, Moses had written down. They have all been copied and we can read all he wrote, for it is in the Bible. The paper Moses used was rolled up like a piece of cloth. He wrote five in all and these he called his books.

When Moses had done writing these books he told the priest to take care of them and to read them to all the Israelites, to the men, the women, and the little children, that they might know how to please God.

Moses loved the Israelites very much and desired God to give them to the care of some good man.

So God gave the work to Joshua, one of the good spies; he had helped Moses to do God's work for forty years, so that Moses had taught him a great deal. Moses called Joshua and said to him: "God will let you take the children of Israel into Canaan; you must be very

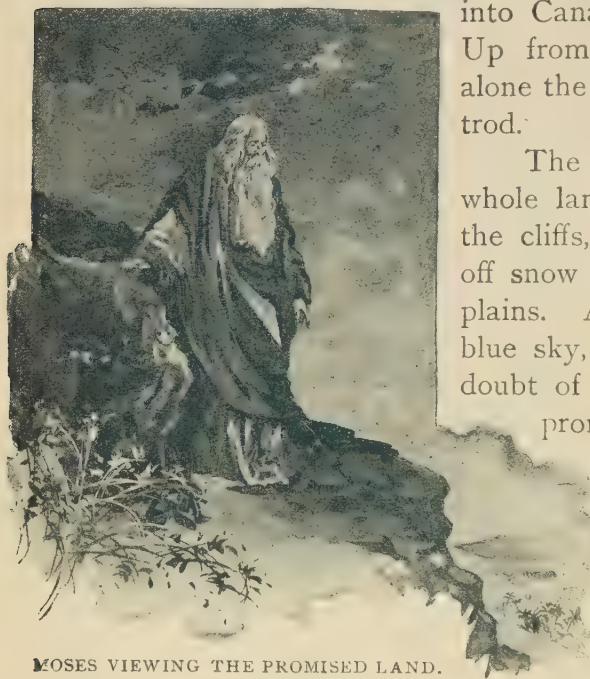


brave, for you will have to fight against the wicked people; but God will help you. God will never leave you, nor forsake you." Moses then called all the people together, and told them that he was going to die, saying: "I am a hundred and twenty years old this day. I offended God, and I cannot go into the land of Canaan; but Joshua will take you there. Remember to obey and to love God and he will always bless you."

We now approach the end of Moses' life. He had already composed his own funeral march. His funeral was to be the grandest the earth had known, though unwitnessed by mortal eyes. As leader, he had recently conquered the Moabites and had hoped to lead the Israelites

into Canaan, but this was not for him. Up from the desert plain he climbed alone the same path which Balaam had trod.

The view was incomparable. The whole land was before him—the desert, the cliffs, the rivers, the lakes, the far-off snow crests, the rich fields and the plains. As he stands out against the blue sky, what is he thinking of? No doubt of this land before him; the land promised to Abraham, to Isaac and to Jacob and to their children. This was the land for whose sake he had been born, for whose people he had suffered, hungered and thirsted.

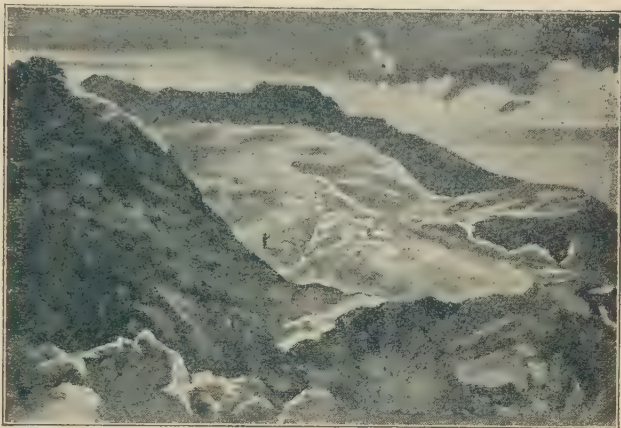


MOSES VIEWING THE PROMISED LAND.

Just before him lay the palm city Jericho with its gardens. He knew that the standards of Israel would float there, significant of the advance of his people from height to height till all the land was won. He knew, moreover, that God would do for his people far more in that land than he had done in Egypt and on the march. Cities loomed up, the temple crowned Jerusalem's height, and Bethlehem grew sacred with the voice of the Messiah. "He saw it with his eyes, but he was not to go over thither."

Josephus says: "Amidst the tears of the people, the women beating their breasts and the children giving way to uncontrollable wailing, he withdrew. At a certain point in his ascent he made a sign to the weeping multitude to advance no farther, taking with him only the elders, the high priest Eleazar and the general Joshua; while still speaking to them, a cloud suddenly stood over him and he vanished.

God himself buried Moses, not upon the top of the hill, but in some secret place under the hill. No one knows where Moses lies but the angels, who carried his soul to



MOUNT ABARIM.

God. The uncertainty of his place of burial marks Moses as too great a man to be the object of pilgrimages. It is singular how God hedges in the great, the really great, by simplicity. His grave is a sublime mountain; the view which it commands is fadeless. The end is complete. Scripture calls Moses the "meekest of men." That means endurance, courage, the sinking of every selfish motive. He wished Aaron to be first; he desired all the Lord's people to be prophets. He founded no dynasty, he left no proud house. His two sons remained in obscurity and his successor was chosen from another tribe. From the very start his task was thankless, judging it from an earthly standard.

His life stands for that type of life which labors but never enters into its labors. It is like Jesus, the type of the highest life. No one knows where he was buried. He did not even reap what he had sown while he was in the world. The best, the greatest, the mightiest of all, keeps watch on the heights of Nebo.

#### THE BURIAL OF MOSES.

By Nebo's lonely mountain,  
On this side Jordan's wave,  
In a vale in the land of Moab,  
There lies a lonely grave;

But no man dug that sepulchre,  
And no man saw it e'er,  
For the angels of God upturned the sod,  
And laid the dead man there.

That was the grandest funeral  
 That ever passed on earth;  
 But no man heard the tramping,  
 Or saw the train go forth;  
 Noiselessly as the daylight  
 Comes when the night is done,  
 And the crimson streak on the ocean's  
 cheek  
 Grows into the great sun;

Noiselessly as the spring-time  
 Her crown of verdure weaves,  
 And all the trees on all the hills  
 Open their thousand leaves,—  
 So, without sound of music,  
 Or voice of them that wept,  
 Silently down from the mountain crown  
 The great procession swept.

Lo! when the warrior dieth  
 His comrades in the war,  
 With arms reversed, and muffled drum,  
 Follow the funeral car.  
 They show the banners taken,  
 They tell his battles won,  
 And after him lead his masterless steed,  
 While peals the minute gun.

Amid the noblest of the land,  
 Men lay the sage to rest,  
 And give the bard an honored place,  
 With costly marble dressed,  
 In the great minster transept,  
 Where lights like glories fall,  
 And the choir sings, and the organ rings,  
 Along the emblazoned wall.

This was the bravest warrior  
 That ever buckled sword;  
 This the most gifted poet  
 That ever breathed a word;  
 And never earth's philosopher  
 Traced with his golden pen,  
 On the deathless page, truths half as  
 sage  
 As *he* wrote down for men;

And had he not high honor?  
 The hill-side for his pall;  
 To lie in state while angels wait;  
 With stars for tapers tall; [plumes,  
 And the dark rock pines, like tossing  
 Over his bier to wave;  
 And God's own hand, in that lonely land,  
 To lay him in the grave,—

In that deep grave, without a name,  
 Whence his uncoffined clay  
 Shall break again, — O wondrous  
 thought,—  
 Before the Judgment day;  
 And stand, with glory wrapped around,  
 On the hills he never trod, [life,  
 And speak of the strife that won our  
 With the incarnate Son of God.

O lonely tomb in Moab's land!  
 O dark Beth-peor's hill!  
 Speak to these curious hearts of ours,  
 And teach them to be still.  
 God hath his mysteries of grace,—  
 Ways that we cannot tell;  
 He hides them deep, like the secret sleep  
 Of him he loved so well.

—C. F. Alexander.



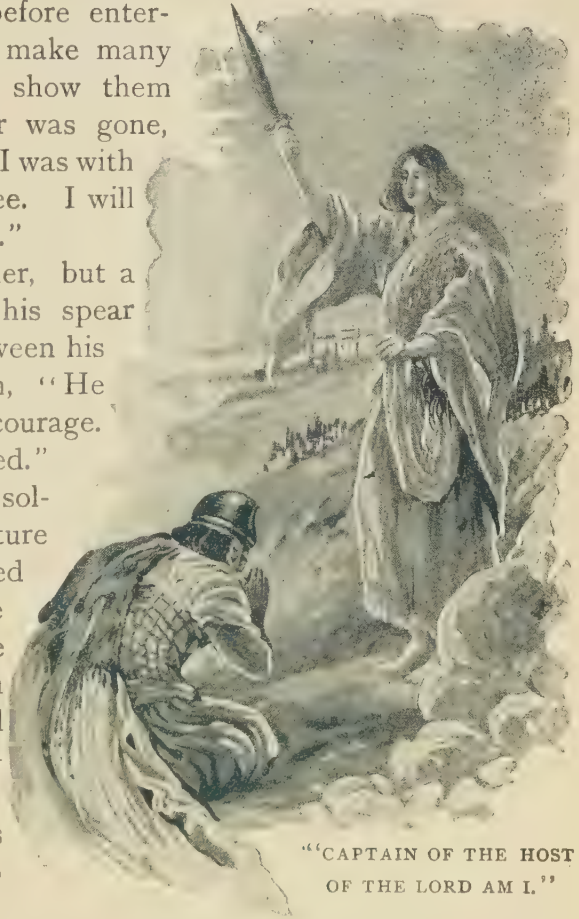
## CHAPTER XXII

### JOSHUA, THE NEW LEADER IN ISRAEL

THE Israelites were now close to the land of Canaan. No people could have felt the death of a leader more than they felt the loss of Moses at this time. In the story of Joshua we are introduced to battles. The spiritual idea is not lost, but seems to be of less importance than war. The Israelites, before entering the promised land, must make many conquests. God labored to show them that even though one leader was gone, *He* was still with them. "As I was with Moses, so will I be with thee. I will not fail thee, nor forsake thee."

Joshua was not a teacher, but a soldier. He always carried his spear in his hand or strung it between his shoulders. It is said of him, "He was strong and of a good courage. He was not afraid nor dismayed." Yes, Joshua was more of a soldier than a teacher. Scripture says that he once complained to Moses because some of the people spent their time prophesying, whereupon Moses replied that he wished all God's people were prophets.

God appeared to Moses in the Burning Bush; to Joshua he appeared as the "Captain of the Lord's host, with a drawn sword in his hand." The same drawn sword went before him till he conquered the land.



"CAPTAIN OF THE HOST  
OF THE LORD AM I."

The people now stood ready to enter on the campaign which was to bring the promised land under their sway. There was the great river Jordan between the wilderness and Canaan which the Israelites were obliged to cross. They saw the hills of Canaan on the other side, and the city of Jericho also, with a high wall around it.

To learn the strength of this Joshua sent two of the Israelites as spies to Jericho. He did not wish the people to know when the two spies came into the town, so they went just at dusk to the house of a woman named Rahab, who kept an inn. Some people saw them and told the king of Jericho that two Israelites were in Rahab's house. The king sent detectives to bring them to him, but God put it into Rahab's heart to be kind to them. She took the spies to the top of her house and hid them on the roof, which was flat like a floor. Here she was accustomed to spread a great many stalks of flax to dry. She told the spies to lie down and that she would cover them over with stalks.

After the detectives had gone, Rahab said to the spies: "I feel certain that God will let the people of Israel come and live in Canaan. We have heard how he has helped them to pass through the Red Sea, and I believe he is the only true God. I have been kind to you, will you be kind to me in return?"

The spies then said that if she would not tell any one about their having been there, they would save her life and the life of her relatives. She then helped them to escape from the town. Her house was built on the wall of Jericho. One of the windows looked toward the hills. She tied a rope around the men and let them down from the window. When they reached the outside they told her to bind that rope to her window and let it remain there, so that when they came to take the city they would know which house to save. Then they returned and reported all they had seen.

Joshua rose up early in the morning, and said to the people: "Look and see where the priests take the Ark, and follow them."

The priests took the Ark, and went before the host to the bank of the river Jordan. They then stood still while Joshua explained about the great wonder that God was about to do.

When the priests stepped down into the Jordan, the water below them ran away, and above them it piled up like a wall. The priests

walked along in the dry path till they came to the middle, then stopped, and Joshua said to the people: "Now, pass over Jordan."

So all the people went over into the land of Canaan, except twelve men; these Joshua had told to remain until the host had crossed, and then to take twelve great stones from the bed of the river, carry them over into Canaan, and erect them by the side of the river as a memorial of the crossing of the Jordan.

The passage of the Jordan marks in a strong way the providence of God. On the further side the Israelites halted and sanctified them-



A HOUSE ON THE WALL.

selves. This sanctification washed away all the neglect of the desert wandering. From this fact the place was named Gilgal. Here they set up the tabernacle and kept the Ark for many years. Later on the Ark was moved first to Shechem, then to Shiloh, further north and east, at a point more convenient for the assembling of the tribes coming from the various parts of the kingdom.

The first halt after leaving Gilgal was Jericho, a rich and beautiful city, with abundant springs and palm trees. The people residing at Jericho were so terrified over the wonder that the Israelites had performed that they closed their gates and remained behind the walls.



The children of Israel waited till God told them what to do. One day Joshua looked up and saw a man standing before him, dressed like a soldier, and with a sword in his hand. He went up to him and said: "Have you come to help us fight; or have you come to help the people of Jericho?" The man answered: "I come as captain of the army of the Lord." He was greater than a man, greater than an angel. He was the Lord from heaven. Joshua then worshiped Him, saying: "What will my Lord say to His servant?" Then the captain of God's army said in a loud voice: "Take thy shoes from off thy feet, for this is holy ground whereon thou standest." The Lord then told Joshua how to fight against Jericho.

Joshua called the priests and the people of Israel, and explained the plan of attack. He then commanded seven priests to take a ram's horn each and walk before the Ark. He commanded the soldiers to walk before the priests, and the balance of the people to walk behind the priests.

The next day Joshua and the people walked once round the walls of Jericho and then went home. Next day they went round again; and the next day, and the next day. Six days, one after the other, they walked round Jericho, and each time went home to their tents without having fought. As each day passed, up to the seventh, and nothing but walking was accomplished, the people in Jericho took courage and thought the march of Israel was only a farce. No doubt they called out in derision and stood on the wide walls shouting. On the seventh day the host of Israel walked about the walls seven times. On the seventh round they shouted, the trumpeters blew the trumpets, and at the same time the walls of Jericho fell down. The soldiers went in and took the city. The house of Rahab was saved. She married one of the Israelites and her descendants became the royal line of David and of Jesus.

The second city which they took was Ai. It was located in a pass, and hence difficult to take; yet Israel must have it, else she could not take the other cities. At first she suffered defeat, but Joshua finally set forth a plan of attack which proved successful. During the night he hid a detachment of troops in a deep chasm. He himself led the balance of the force up from the lowlands and attacked the city from the front. The king and all his people came out to



FALLING OF THE WALLS OF JERICHO.

battle, whereupon Joshua's army feigned defeat and retreated down the valley. When they were well on the plain, the detachment in ambush pushed forward, took the gates and fired the city. The smoke of conflagration became a signal for Joshua to turn on the enemy, who became demoralized and the battle was won for Israel. Joshua and his people were now in possession of the gateways of the land and could carry out the conquest as circumstances dictated.

There were many other cities in Canaan besides Jericho and Ai. All the people heard about Joshua and were afraid, yet they took their swords and spears and fought against him. God always helped the Israelites, so they always conquered. First they went to one city, conquered it, then went to another and did the same. It would be interesting to follow them every step of the way, but it would make too long a story for our space. It is best to speak only of the prominent incidents of the campaign and the final settlements of the tribes.

You will remember that Jericho fell without a battle, that the conquest of Ai was only the defeat of a single king. But now Israel had reached a place where a real battle was to be fought, where the combined nations had met to destroy Israel or to give up in hopeless defeat. The battle is known in history as the battle of Merom, because it occurred on the shores of Lake Merom. The battle, though, was fought to obtain possession of a fortress called Hazor, held by King Jabin, "The Wise," the exact location of which is in doubt.

On the banks of Merom, however, all the Canaanitish armies under the leadership of Jabin took their final stand. "All these went out, they and all their hosts with them, even as the sand that is upon the seashore in multitude . . . and when all were met together they came and pitched together at the waters of Merom to fight against Israel." In this battle Israel met face to face, for the first time, the horse and the chariot, which were "very many."

The shore of Lake Merom, and the valley close by, gave the enemy every opportunity to deploy and maneuver their great weapons of war to advantage.

Joshua's movements previous to the battle are not given. We are told that at nightfall he came into a position of advantage, from whence or how no one knew, and like a thunderbolt dropped upon the enemy on the mountain slope before they had time to range themselves in



order on the plain. It was infantry against cavalry and chariots. We have no account of the battle as it progressed, yet we have the bulletin of the result, which reads: "The Lord delivered them into the hand of Israel, who smote them and chased them." Hazor with its king was taken and the campaign gladly ended.

The glorious victories which the Israelites had attained permitted them now to turn their attention to the assignment of the land among the twelve tribes. Joshua's tribe, the very powerful one of Ephraim—powerful because it had descended from Joseph—thought it should have more than was given it. Joshua was impartial, and said if more was desired it must be carved out with the sword. Each people were now settled, and settled for the first time in their history. The tribe of Benjamin was not a big tribe, but possessed a martial spirit, setting the pace for battles. The cry was "After thee, O Benjamin."



HEBRON.

You will remember that Caleb was one who never flinched or lost courage. He was of the tribe of Judah, becoming an Israelite by adoption. He was a friend and faithful companion of Joshua. Because of his devotion to Jehovah, Moses once said that he should obtain a portion of the land on which "his feet had trodden."

The one spot on which Caleb had fixed his heart was the beautiful and fertile valley of Hebron. There in the cave of Machpelah slept Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Sarah, Rebekah and Leah; yet it was not this which fixed his attention to the spot. It was because of the grapes and the verdure of the valleys. He asked Joshua to give him this delightful spot, whereupon Joshua told him he could have it if he could win it. Here the giant Anak lived with his three giant sons—all

enemies to the Canaanites. No one, previous to this, had been able to conquer him. He even laughed at his foes and looked away undismayed into the winding valley of Palestine.

Joshua had a loving regard for his old companion, and tried to dissuade Caleb, but he three times over told Joshua that his strength was unbroken, and that he would work his own way to the castle of the giants. In a pitched battle Caleb gained "Kirjath Arba, which is Hebron." The city and country fell to him with all their natural riches.

Down the valley of Hebron was a sacred city, named Kirjath Sepher, known as "the city of books," because of its famous library. Caleb, with a good bit of romance in his heart, said whoever of his tribe would take that city should win his daughter, the beautiful Achsah. Thus it was that Othniel became a hero and an accepted lover in a single day. But Achsah, not being content with the city, requested her husband to bring her a beast of burden. She mounted it and went by a straight course to her father's house. Calling Caleb, as a lover calls a loved one, she asked for a greater inheritance, and said: "Give me a blessing; for thou hast given me a south land; give me also springs of water. And he gave her the upper springs and the nether springs." Thus her dowry was complete.

The people made booths and under vine and fig-tree held feasts in the open air, rejoicing because the conquest was over and Canaan was theirs.

The national capital was now fixed at Shechem, on the very field that Joseph had crossed as he went to find his brothers and was sold as a slave and carried into Egypt. It was a beautiful place, looking down the Jordan valley, and at times one could gaze on the far distant sea.

Here also were the mounts of Ebal and Gerizim, where the nations gathered for a new compact with God. Here also, on Mount Gerizim, Joseph was buried. They had carried him all the way from Egypt, during those long, long, weary years. How often, oh! how often, he had longed for the fields and the hills of his beloved land! He was now at rest where he loved to roam as a boy.

And now Joshua's work was over. The closing years of his life were like the waning hours of a full moon. Shadows began to broaden in the land. This he predicted in his final address to his people.

He urged them to keep the vows they had made with Jehovah and to be faithful to Sinai and to Gerizim. Shortly before his death the covenant was renewed. In token of this he raised a memorial stone, in order that they might remember it in the years to come.



PANORAMA OF SHECHEM.

He died not long after, at the age of 110 years—just a quarter of a century after crossing the Jordan. With his death the light of Israel seemed to fade and even to go out. They buried him in Timnath-Serah, on the north side of the hill of Gaash. He had been a man of “good courage”; a true soldier; an unbeaten hero. He stands in Hebrew literature as the ideal friend. He never faltered.





RUTH GLEANING IN THE FIELDS OF BOAZ.

## CHAPTER XXIII

### RUTH AND NAOMI; OR THE EARLY ANCESTORS OF THE HOLY FAMILY

THE first scene which presents itself to our readers after the stirring events of the last chapter, is one whose beauty appeals to the whole world, and one of the few incidents which show the godliness of the time. In the lives of Ruth and

Naomi we are brought face to face with facts which are priceless because they reveal the *home* life of some of the Israelites. It would be an invaluable aid to literature were there many similar pictures illustrating their daily life.

In the quiet story of these simple people we come face to face with the early ancestors of "The Holy Family." From Ruth and Boaz we come to Obed, and from Obed to Jesse, and from Jesse to King David. Here also we have the picture of Bethlehem, where Christ was born, the place which witnessed the scene from which has originated our "Christmas." It is singular how

history grows. It begins in a simple way and embodies the life of millions of people.



"And Ruth said, Intreat me not to leave thee, or to return from following after thee: for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge: thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God."

Notice how the life of Christ began. "Now it came to pass in the days when the judges ruled, that there was a famine in

the land. And a certain man of Bethlehem-Judah went to sojourn in the country of Moab, he and his wife and his two sons. The name of the husband was Elimelech, and that of the wife, Naomi."

They had formerly lived in Bethlehem—a city most beautifully located on the summit of a hill, before which stretched out the slope of many a fertile valley. So peaceful were its surroundings that it would not be difficult to fancy that the song of angels might be heard there.

Just now, however, the country was parched and dead. Doubtless many moved away, yet we know not how many, for scripture speaks of only this one family. In leaving the drouth-stricken country and journeying toward the purple hills of Moab, all looked beautiful, and even continued beautiful to them after their journey was well complete. In the new home there came many happy days—indeed, so very many happy ones that it was only when they thought of the old friends in Bethlehem they were ever the least bit homesick. It began to look as if they had said good-by to old Canaan forever, when suddenly one day a great sorrow came upon the wife and sons. The sorrow could be summed up in four words—the father had died. There was such meaning to them in this short sentence.

You ask, what did they do now, go back home? No. On the contrary, they took deeper root in Moab than ever before; their life resembled oaks which, having been through fierce weather, are able to brave the strongest blasts. Their sorrow drew to them the sympathy of the surrounding people. Their worthiness brought respect. In time, the sons learned to love, and were loved in return by two princely Moabites—Orpah and Ruth. There were then no church bells in Moab, but with the shepherds' pipes as instruments an orchestra was formed, surpassing in sweetness all the music of the wood. Had you passed by chance through the fields where dwelt the shepherds, you would have heard them playing the melodies of nature.

On one memorable morning there passed a procession of people. Later in the day, they, with all their kind, danced in merriment on the green. Do you like to think that the leading participants were Orpah and Ruth, and that this occasion was the celebration of their wedding, and that the grooms were the sons of Naomi? They were none other.



Mahlon and Chilion had wed Orpah and Ruth. They were happy, but the happiest of all in the group was Naomi, the mother of Mahlon and Chilion. It brought joy to her heart and her household.

Together they dwelt ten years, but the ten years passed all too quickly. Then the sons became ill and the mother lost her sons, and Orpah and Ruth their husbands. Naomi said she could not remain in Moab. Three graves were more than she could endure. The beauty faded out of the sky and the purple seemed all too somber on the mountain sides.

The daughters-in-law arose to go back with her to Canaan. But Naomi said, in language the sweetest and greatest in all literature: "Go, return each to her mother's house; the Lord deal kindly with you, as ye have dealt with the dead and with me. The Lord grant you that ye may find rest, each of you." Then they lifted up their voice and wept. But they said unto her, "Surely we will return with thee unto thy people."

Then Naomi turned again to her daughters-in-law, saying: "Why will ye go with me? It grieveth me much for your sakes that the hand of the Lord is gone out against me." Then Orpah lifted up her voice and wept again.

And Ruth clave unto her, saying: "Intreat me not to leave thee or to return from following after thee; for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge; thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God; where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried; the Lord do so to me, and more also, if ought but death part thee and me."

Then Naomi and Ruth went hand in hand back to the old valley up in Judah, and Orpah went back to her mother's house.

Nature gave Naomi an unconscious but beautiful reception. The valleys were luxuriant with grass, the plants were blooming, the birds were singing and the grapes were ripening on the vine. It was a joyous welcome home! When the women reached Bethlehem, the town went into a tumult. Naomi had been absent many years—possibly twenty—the exact number is not given. She went away young; she returned so sorrowed that the people said: "Is this our kinswoman Naomi?"

"And she said unto them, Call me not Naomi, which means my



RUTH AT THE FEET OF BOAZ.

delight, but call me Mara, which means bitterness or sorrow, for the Almighty hath dealt very bitterly with me."

After the hand of welcome had been extended, the two women settled down and began life over again. Ruth said she was able even among strangers to earn bread for both her mother and herself, and that Naomi was to remain at the fireside, holding herself ready to welcome her home at the end of the day.

So Ruth went out with the maidens to glean in the fields of Boaz. Before going, Naomi commended her to the favor of God. While laboring, Boaz, who was a distant kinsman of Naomi's, seeing the splendid devotion of the new gleaner, asked her name, then said to the head servant: "See that plenty of grain fall into her path."

Soon he went and greeted the beautiful gleaner, and said to her in a kind and thoughtful way, "Go not to glean in another field, but stay with my maidens." He assured her that no harm would come to her. Naomi was not content to let Ruth labor for their bread alone, for she felt that her noble daughter should be conceded a place among her tribe. She had ancestral rights in the commonwealth, and hence saw no impropriety in urging that equal rights be given her daughter. When learning Naomi's wish in the matter, Boaz courted the fair stranger with the hope of making her his wife.

There was, however, one by law who had a prior claim, and this claim must be met and settled before his own marriage with Ruth could be legalized.

Boaz went to the gate of the city and called Naomi's nearest kinsman, also the ten elders and all others interested in Naomi's estate, to come and listen to what he was about to say. Boaz then stated the case and asked Naomi's relative if he, as nearest kinsman, would purchase Naomi's rights which came to her in the estates of her deceased husband and sons. He said he would. Then said Boaz: "Are you ready to fulfill the obligation of marriage which goes with it? Are you ready to marry her daughter Ruth?" The kinsman replied that he was very willing to defend and take care of Naomi's estates, but he could not marry her daughter because that would mar his own title to his estates.

Then said Boaz: "I stand ready to fulfill a kinsman's part; I will pledge myself to care for Naomi's interests and to marry her daughter." But he said to the kinsman relinquishing the claim: "It will be necessary for you, in the presence of the elders and at this gate, to confer your rights upon me."

The retiring claimant said that Boaz was one of the worthy and wealthy men of the tribe, and he felt assured that he would carry out his pledge, and so conferred on him the right to purchase Naomi's estate and to marry the daughter. The agreement was ratified by the simple custom of the day: "Now this was the manner in former time in Israel concerning redeeming and concerning changing. For to confirm all things a man plucked off his shoe and gave it to his neighbor. And this was a testimony in Israel."

So the kinsman took off his shoe in the presence of the elders at the gate and gave it to Boaz. Everything was thus settled, and the



compact stood until the tribe was no more. The convened court then pressed forward and placed upon Boaz the blessing of Jehovah.

In due time a little one was born into the family, who became Naomi's especial pet. The neighbors, in coming in to look at the babe, said unto Naomi: "Blessed be the Lord which hath not left thee this day without a kinsman, that his name may be famous in Israel. And he shall be unto thee a restorer of thy life and a nourisher of thine old age, for thy daughter-in-law who loveth thee is better to thee than seven sons."

"And Naomi took the child and laid it in her bosom and became nurse unto it." Its arrival was a joyful forerunner, not only to this simple family, but to all the world. God had carried Ruth and Naomi into strange paths, but he had led them into green pastures and beside still waters. No, I have not forgotten the baby's name. He was called "Obed," which means "serving." The name points away to his great descendant, Jesus, who said: "I came not to be ministered unto, but to minister."

This home was ever full of repose, even when other parts of Israel were disturbed.

## CHAPTER XXIV

### DEBORAH; OR A MOTHER IN ISRAEL

AFTER the death of Joshua there was no head to the Israelitish government, no treasury, and no army. The war for possession had caused the tribes to create a temporary government; but when each tribe had secured the rights demanded, it became separate and inde-

pendent and the united government was abolished. Absolute peace, however, did not long remain.

The Israelites were surrounded by hostile nations. There were cities like Jebus (afterwards Old Jerusalem), with strong, impregnable fortresses, which were still in the hands of the enemy. Thus the separate tribes were open to attack, both from within and without.

It was under these conditions that the encroachments upon single tribes continued bit by bit, until their boundary lines were trended upon here and there, much as the washing of the sea trenches



CONFIDENT OF VICTORY.

upon the line of shore. Occasionally some one tribe resisted, but when the danger was overcome the leader sank back into private life, and the army laid down the bow and the spear for the plow and the pruning-hook. The leaders who came to the front on these occasions were called judges. Though appointed for the time only, the office tended to become permanent.

This period of transition was one which tried the nation. It was similar to that critical period in American history preceding the adoption of the Constitution and which extended from the close of the War of Independence to the election of George Washington as President. The monarchy, which was broken at the battle of Merom, through the leadership of Joshua, revived again under Jabin II., King of Hazor. Jabin had gathered horsemen and chariots, as his predecessor had done, and with his troops overran the northern territories of Israel. The Israelites dared not travel the open roads, but instead frequented the byways and circuitous paths known only to themselves. They had no weapons, and watch was kept over the forges so that none could be made. "There was not a spear nor a shield seen among the forty thousand people in Israel."

On the main thoroughfare, crossing Canaan, was the town of *Bethel*. Near her sanctuary were two trees—one an oak, under which Jacob buried the old nurse Deborah, the other a palm, called "the palm tree of Deborah," named in honor of the Deborah of whom we are about to speak. Here she dwelt with her husband, Lapidoth.

Deborah was not only the judge, but a prophetess. The Israelites used to come to her residence beneath the palm, asking advice and listening to her words of wisdom. She said there was an unknown Israelite up in the far north of Canaan at Kedesh-Naphtali by the name of Barak, who would make a famous leader, and that she would summon him to take command of an army against the Canaanites. Barak was greatly impressed by the lofty genius of the woman, but refused to take the lead unless she would accompany him, guide his movements, and name the day when he should attack the enemy. She answered him in the Hebrew language: "I will go; I will go;" yet she warned him that if a woman went as an adviser a woman would reap the glory and the honor of the campaign.

The movement started at Kadesh, and nearly all the tribes took



part in the contest. Those across the Jordan, however, held debates, preferring, as the Scriptures poetically describe it, to remain behind and listen to the music of the shepherds piping their pipes in the sheepfolds. Other tribes, dwelling by the distant sea, preferred to cling to their ships, yet their hearts, in a measure, were in the contest. Deborah and Barak became leaders indeed, and ten thousand people, enthused by their spirit, went with them to Mount Tabor, a lonely



Jael Advancing to meet Sisera.

spot, but whose slopes and broad fields gave opportunity for the drilling of a mighty force.

Jabin, the Canaanitish king, was not present in person at the battle, but sent his army and all the people that were with him under the leadership of his captain, Sisera. The latter took his position on the southwest corner of the plain of Esdraelon, at the river Kishon, it being a most favorable spot for the maneuvering of his nine hundred chariots of iron. Here on a spur of land covered with trees Sisera entrenched himself.

Deborah saw the alien army moving up to the spot where she had foretold their defeat. She now stood, full of expectancy, crying to her

general: "Arise, Barak, *this* is the day when the Lord shall deliver Sisera into thy hands."

Just as the battle was about to begin, a storm of sleet and rain, coming from the east, burst full in the face of the enemy, crippling their slingers and archers and rendering helpless their swordmen. All this time the storm, beating at the backs of the Israelites, enabled them to recognize its providential character. The more the rain descended and the wind blew, the higher rose their courage. The rain filled the four streams which fed the river Kishon till it became a roaring torrent, overflowing the plain.

As the Canaanites could not control the horses, which were made furious by the hail, nor the chariots in the soggy ground, their great army broke and the soldiers fled over the hills toward Harosheth, to the home of Sisera, their general. Not one of the fugitives, however, ever reached his fortress. The news of the battle even did not reach it till long after.

Sisera leaped from his chariot and fled to Zaanim, a plain lying close to Kadesh, which was covered with oaks. Underneath one of these oaks was a settlement of Arabs, who, although related by marriage to the Israelites, were at peace with King Jabin. As these Arabs had been the first to inform Sisera of the movements of the Israelites he felt safe in coming to them now. So here, three days after the battle, he arrived. He did not go to the tent of Heber, the chief, but for greater security went to the tent of the chieftainess, Jael. She advanced to meet him, paying him that oriental reverence his position demanded. Upon her invitation, he entered, resting on the partially raised divan in the center of the tent. She covered him over with a mantle.

At the door of nearly every Arab tent is a skin filled with milk. In response to his request for water, she gave him milk to drink, pouring it into a bowl which was reserved for illustrious guests. Feeling secure after such hospitality, he fell asleep.

It is an old-time custom among Arabs to protect all persons to whom one extends hospitality. For this reason, Sisera had sought the tent and asked for drink. Jael, however, who had tasted the spirit of war, decided that her act should become a decoy. After listening to the deep breathing of the exhausted soldier, she advanced with an im-



DEBORAH.



plement of death and killed him. Just then Barak arrived in swift pursuit. Jael went out to meet him, and said unto him: "Come, and I will show thee the man whom thou seekest." King Jabin was now subdued and Barak was conqueror.

Soon after, in accordance with the Hebrew custom, Deborah led a mighty choral service, chanting the nation's victory. It was a famous song, telling of the mighty host, the storm, the rout of the enemy and final victory of the Israelites. What the Book of Judges teaches faintly, indirectly her song teaches fully. If there are circumstances in the life of

Israel that jar upon our feelings, we must think over them broadly and wisely. God allowed much for ignorance and forgave much for sincerity. Here we are shown not only the virtues, but the failings of those early days. The virtues we may accept, the wrong we must decline to follow. As a

mother, Deborah taught her children the advantages of a national union which influenced their whole future career.

Ever after the Israelites had greater confidence in themselves and inclined their hearts also affected their religious

toward freedom. Their victory life. They had never up to this time been free from idolatry. Now they perceived that their success was due to the help of Jehovah.

A standing army was something of which they knew nothing. Their soldiers carried into the army their own food, hence an army could not long exist. It was gathered quickly to meet an emergency, then dispersed in the same way.



DEBORAH LEADING  
THE CHORAL SERVICE.

## CHAPTER XXV

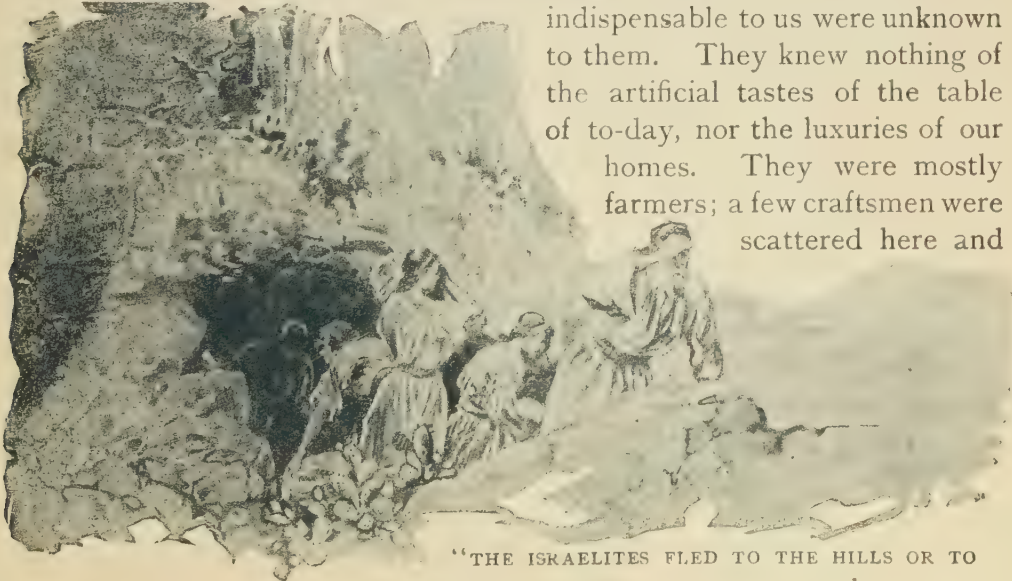
### GIDEON; OR THE FIRST HINTS OF THE KINGDOM

GIDEON lived at a time when, according to Scripture, "every man did that which was right in his own eyes."

We must not understand from this that the age was a lawless one; on the contrary, had it not been for trouble coming from the outside, Israel would have presented the novel spectacle of a nation living in harmony without an army, a police force, a court, or a judge. This was the ideal state in which the Israelites lived, when oppression from the outside called the nation together to appoint a leader to drill them for action. They decided that a leader, with power to persuade but in no sense command, was what they wanted. The term "Judge" sounded to them more military than judicial, hence they chose that title for their leader.

The simplicity of Israel's national life was characteristic of her private life. Each village was independent and each family contained all the requirements of life within itself. Many things which seem

indispensable to us were unknown to them. They knew nothing of the artificial tastes of the table of to-day, nor the luxuries of our homes. They were mostly farmers; a few craftsmen were scattered here and



"THE ISRAELITES FLED TO THE HILLS OR TO CAVERNS IN THE ROCKS."

there, but that was all. The household had its own wheat, herds, flocks, vegetables, and fruits.

The clothing was spun, woven, and made at home. The shoes as well as all other wearing apparel were fashioned in the house. There were no factories, no schools of art or science in the land. There was no commerce except such as was gathered about the passing caravan where barter was made for jewels, robes, and embroideries. The life of the people was singularly peaceful and independent. It was trouble from the outside, alone, that caused them to select a leader.

The judge appointed had much to contend with and much to overcome. This was especially true of Gideon, the first real judge, and the hero of this little chapter. The Bible does not give the exact date of his judgeship, but it was considerably later than the days of Deborah.

Peace with plenty at this time had made the Israelites tolerant toward idolatry. Deborah's fervor in behalf of the true religion was in some measure forgotten. The lack of an organized head had made Israel an easy prey to warlike tribes, who, looking on their rich valleys, longed to possess them. Under Deborah the enemy had come from the north; this time he came from the east and the south.

The country of Midian, at the south, had grown, and in growing had spread north over a considerable territory, and in spreading had become more barbarous and more fond of conquest. The Midianites had made an alliance with the old enemies of the Israelites to the south and east, almost as far north as the nation's limits. They now streamed over the fords of the Jordan, bringing their households and herds. They were likened to flights of locusts in their destructiveness. They existed by war; they did not cultivate the soil except in an occasional spot, through the aid of slaves. They caused villages to disappear and land to revert to a state of nature. Whenever and wherever civilized people saw them coming, they abandoned their plains and valleys, seeking refuge on some height or within some forest inaccessible to the marauding foe.

In this manner they ere long came upon the Israelites, who, like other tribes, fled to the hills or to caverns in the rocks. This marauding tribe was led on by two superior and two subordinate chiefs. The names of the superior chiefs were, Zebah, "The Man Killer," and Zalmunna, "The Pitiless." The two lesser chiefs were called Oreb, "The



Raven," and Zeeb, "The Wolf." These last were always arrayed in scarlet cloaks; their camels were decorated with gold chains, and crescent shaped ornaments were placed on their heads. The men of the tribes also wore gold chains about their necks, earrings in the ears and nose-rings in the nose, as well as other ornaments on their persons.

Several prophets had been sent to Israel urging the people to turn to Jehovah. But seven years of scourging by the enemy had elapsed



THRESHING OUT GRAIN.

before they would listen to advice or turn in penitence to God. When they did, Jehovah raised them up a deliverer. This deliverer was Gideon.

On one occasion the invaders openly attacked God, and said: "Let us take to ourselves the houses of God." They were not content to attack the people; they attacked the people's God. Gideon's reputation for valor was such that the Midianites were afraid of him, even though his home was at Ophrah, on the very edge of the field of invasion. Gideon, considering the times, supported an elaborate establishment. He had ten slaves and an armor-bearer. The name of the latter was Phurah. The call of God came to Gideon while he was brooding over the losses to his family and the wrongs done his nation. He was standing in the wine-press—although the season was not vintage

—threshing out grain. During grape season, when wine was being made, the juice as it was extracted from the pulp ran through a channel cut in the rock, into a reservoir. In this reservoir Gideon was now hiding his grain as he threshed it out.

Beyond and above this cave was a rock which rose high up in the midst of a grove of trees. Among the trees grew a terebinth, which spread its branches entirely over the rock and the cave as well. Upon the summit of this rock an altar had been placed and dedicated to Baal. The grove was dedicated to the goddess Astarte. Idolatry had gradually crept into the land, and although prophets had been among the people to warn them against God's wrath, yet they heeded not the warning. Suddenly a youth appeared to Gideon—"a messenger of the Lord," with a solemn and mysterious message. Gideon stopped and prepared a meal for his guest and ordered it spread beneath the terebinth on the rock. Scarcely had the feast been set when a touch of the pilgrim's staff consumed the meal in flames and the messenger vanished. Gideon was terrified, and cried out with a consciousness of all that was transpiring, saying: "If the Lord be with us, why has all this befallen us? And the Lord looked upon him and said, Go in this thy might and thou shalt save Israel."

And the angel of the Lord appeared unto him and said: "The Lord is with thee, thou mighty man of valor."

Gideon, like all great men, was too great to understand why God should think of using him for any special work. His modesty and reluctance were, however, satisfied by a vision which caused him to yield himself unreservedly to God. A call was issued him to eradicate the idol worship which had invaded the tribes. While waiting for night to come and the household to fall asleep, he cut down, with the aid of his slaves, the grove dedicated to Astarte. Next morning great consternation was felt by the men of the city, for, behold! the altar of Baal had fallen.

When the people heard of it they arose and came to Joash, Gideon's father, charging Gideon with impiety. The father said in reply, the sacrilege was not on the part of his son but on the part of those who believed that God could not defend himself. He said: "Will ye take upon yourselves to plead Baal's cause? Let Baal plead for himself." Out of this destruction came a new altar, called, in allusion

to things preceding it, Jerubbaal. The name meant the 'e-destroyer of the old altar and the constructor of the new. This was the result of Gideon's *first* call. It prepared the Israelites for a blessing from God.

Gideon's *second* call, and the one best known and understood, is the one assuring him that he was to be an instrument in God's hand to save Israel. He took a fleece of wool, and said: "Behold, I will lay it in the sunshine; if it keep cool, I shall know that Thou wilt save Israel by mine hand." It was cool when all around was hot. He then placed it in the floor, and it was wet when all around was dry.

This proved that he was chosen of God, and he went about his work in a cool manner amid the fire of trying events, and was strong when all around were weak with fear. Next morning he blew on the "well-known horn," which brought together his clan, then his tribe, and later on the three northern tribes.

During the judgeship of Gideon, the Israelites entered upon a campaign consisting of a series of three battles, the last and decisive one



DESTROYING IMAGES AND ALTAR  
OF BAAL.



being that of Jezreel. The Midianites were camped on the slopes of Little Hermon, looking toward Mount Gilboa. Israel was encamped by the spring of Jezreel, on the slopes of Mount Gilboa. "And the Lord said unto Gideon, The people that are with thee are too many for me to give the Midianites into their hands, lest Israel vaunt themselves against me, saying, Mine own hand hath saved me." It was at God's suggestion that Gideon uttered the words: "What man is there that is fearful and faint-hearted? Let him go and return unto his house, lest his brethren's heart faint as well as his heart." That was an old war cry modified in this instance by: "Whosoever is afraid, let him return from Mount Gilboa." So at Gideon's request all the cowards left the army. Gideon felt he must also rid himself of the "hot heads." He discovered who they were by their manner of drinking at the stream. Those who rushed to the water, lying down and plunging their faces into it, he rejected; those who took the water up into the hand, carrying it to the mouth, he selected. Thus by cutting off the cowards and the "hot heads" he had left an army of three hundred picked men equal for any emergency,

He now waited for a sign from heaven. This was soon given him. Descending with his armor-bearer from a spot near the spring, he went cautiously at night to the camp of the enemy. He found all of the great multitude except two resting from their day's plunder and toil. Evidently one had just awakened from a dream which so startled him that he aroused a companion and told him about it. He dreamed that a thin barley cake, having been made from the fields they had trodden and baked in the ovens they had plundered, had rolled down into the center of the camp and had struck the royal tent, rolling it over and over. Both the reciter of the dream and the hearer pronounced the name "Gideon" together. The coincident struck terror to their hearts and they said: "This is the sword of Gideon, the son of Joash."

Gideon heard the recital and bowed himself to the ground. Up the mountain side he returned as silently as he came. He was now sure of his work. The dreamer and the hearer again slept, only to be awakened by the blast of horns, the breaking of pitchers, the flashing of torches, and a war cry coming from three different directions. In a moment the camp was in confusion. Men heaped on one another raised the discordant cry which always accompanies the Bedouin host,

and fled as though mad. The tribe of Ephraim pursued, but the two chief leaders had crossed the fords of the Jordan, and were captured later on. The two lesser—"The Wolf" and "The Raven"—died, the one on the "wine-press of Zeeb," the other "at the Rock of Oreb."

Israel pursued with energy, though greatly exhausted. This fact coined a saying which has been the property of the church ever since. It represented their state—"faint, yet pursuing." The pursuit is de-



THE BLAST OF HORNS, THE BREAKING OF PITCHERS, THE FLASHING OF TORCHES.

scribed as chaff flying before a hurricane—fire leaping from tree to tree—conflagration striding from hill to hill of the dry mountain forests. The only loss that came to Israel was the death of Gideon's brother. But the chase was at last over and the host returned to their homes.

The depth of feeling manifested over the victories was shown in the desire on the part of the Israelite to install Gideon as king. The people wished to make the office perpetual in his family. "Rule thou over us, both thou and thy son, and thy son's son; for thou hast delivered us from the hand of Midian." Gideon declined to accept the office and be installed as king, yet in one sense he did reign, and in almost a kingly way. The people placed in his military mantle unheard-of spoils and riches from the battle.

His house at Ophrah became not only his sanctuary, but his office as priest and ruler. All went well for a time, but alas! Gideon's success, like that of other great men, became his downfall. He took up, in course of time, the unhappy appendage of royalty—polygamous marriage; after this he degenerated. The gold and silver placed in his military cloak he converted into a sacred image, and became afterwards the means of leading Israel astray.

Gideon combined all the qualities necessary for the best success of the day, yet he was far from perfect. He could not carry out all the measures he deemed advisable, and the burdens imposed upon him were too much for his humanity. He gradually degenerated, and no one knows even when he died. We are told that he lived to a good old age, that the land had rest for forty years while he lived, and that at his death he was buried in his father's sepulcher at Ophrah.

But to complete the story of his life we must mention two of his sons. Gideon had taken as one of his wives a young woman living in the city of Shechem. This venerable and beautiful city had a large number of the old Canaanitish families. The woman whom Gideon married was a Canaanite. The son born to them they named Abimelech. He had all the daring, courage and brilliancy of his father, but not his balance of character nor his magnanimity. Gideon refused to be king of the nation. Abimelech became the glad ruler of even a part. When it came to a contest over the succession, the old inhabitants said that they must stand by their own blood. Hence they raised the cry: "Stand by your own stock and kin." Abimelech, hearing this cry, took



advantage of the too frequent oriental custom and disposed of all claimants except Jotham, a half-brother. He alone escaped. Abimelech marched in triumph to Shechem, which was the great commercial city and seat of power in Joshua's time. There beside the oak where Joshua addressed the people, and where rulers were afterwards inaugurated, Abimelech was crowned the first king of Israel.

Suddenly Jotham came forth from his place of concealment at Mount Gerizim and spoke to the assembled people. He dwelt on the subject of government and the interests of the people.

His remarks to us have a twofold interest: *first*, he presented



MOUNT GERIZIM.

logic to the people, and *second*, he introduced a phase of literature then new—a parable in the form of a fable. Fable in Greece, India and Africa endows animals with human speech. But in Jotham's fable, the *trees* were made to speak. His talk was brief, yet sagacious and to the point. He won the favor of his hearers by his candor and humor. Then in closing he let his eye for a moment fall on the verdure below, and said he would tell them a fable. In this fable he carried his hearers back to the early days of the earth, when the trees gathered themselves together to elect a king. He asked his countrymen to listen to this "green council," which he was going to endow with human speech and feeling.

"The trees," he said, "desired a king," so they asked the venerable olive to be their king, but the olive said: "I cannot leave the sacred purpose of God and man; my lot is noble and useful, I cannot lay down

my life work to become a king." They came then to the great green fig tree, but it declined, saying: "I cannot desert the work of supplying sweet and delicious fruit." They then addressed the glorious vine, on the hillside. But the vine said: "I have a God-given work of cheering man. I must not lay down that crown for another kingdom." Thus one by one, the noble, useful and beautiful trees of the forest declined the office of the king. God had given them a task that they could not forsake. The trees then called on a lower order—one not over-burdened with duties. There were the brier and thorn, which grew on the barren side of a mountain. Neither of these was filled with work, care, usefulness, or responsibility. Either of these could take up the proposed calling.

It was the brier, therefore, which was chosen. The brier would kindle a conflagration which would leap from hill to hill, destroying friend and foe alike. So, he said, was Abimelech a brier among the people of Israel. The young seer finished his fable and disappeared, but the lesson had taken root. The great had refused to reign, but the Bramble king attempted it. His reign was a turbulent one. For a time he led his armies successfully against the men of Shechem, but at the tower of Thebez, Abimelech received his death wound from a woman, who threw a stone, hitting him on the head as she stood on the wall of a city which he was besieging. Israel's first real king was not yet. The people had much to learn.

## CHAPTER XXVI

### JEPHTHAH AND HIS DAUGHTER; OR THE WICKED VOW

AMONG the many misunderstood portions of the Bible there is perhaps none so thoroughly misunderstood as that of the Book of Judges. By its own confession it records the deeds of those who did "what was right in their own eyes." There are portions we would be glad to pass by, yet if we would have a true religious history we must take matters as they stand recorded in all their marvelous growth from the birth of Adam down to the present time.

The Bible throughout differs from all other books. It is full of the human side of life, yet withal it is divine, and we shall find just ground for the reality of everything that is in it. To thoroughly understand



JEPHTHAH MET BY HIS DAUGHTER.



the sacred writings, it is necessary to understand the unsettled condition of society of the various ages. Unless we do this, it will be difficult to understand their leaders at all. We must remember that the character of any leader was indicative of the age. Whenever he rose to the top, he did it by virtue borrowed from God. His source of courage was *faith*. "*By faith* they subdued kingdoms, stopped the mouths of lions, escaped the edge of the sword, out of weakness were made strong, waxed valiant in fight, turned to flight the armies of the aliens." We may congratulate ourselves that scripture gives us a freedom we would not dare ascribe to God. He saw the end from the beginning, and in everything there was a purpose.

The story of Jephthah is one we care not to dwell upon. He was of irregular birth, lawless, of great valor, passionate and revengeful, having come from the half-civilized tribe of Manasseh, east of the Jordan. During boyhood he was driven from his Israelitish home and hence was obliged to seek companions from among strange tribes. As time passed on, he placed himself at the head of a band of men, known as the Ammonites, who levied imports on towns and caravans. In this way his fame spread and his name was known to friend and foe alike.

He had not been long absent from home when the Ammonites made war against Israel. Then the people and princes said: "What man is there that will fight against Ammon? None is so brave as Jephthah, shall we call him?" And they went and said unto Jephthah: "Come and be our captain;" but Jephthah said unto the elders of Gilead: "Did not ye hate me and expel me out of my father's house? Why come to me now?" And the elders said: "Turn to us now that we may fight against Ammon." Then Jephthah said: "If ye bring me home to fight against Ammon and the Lord deliver them before me, shall I be your head?" And they said: "The Lord witness between us." And they were compelled to swear to this on the altar at Mizpah. You will remember Mizpah was the place where Jacob and Laban parted company. On the acceptance of this condition, Jephthah placed himself at the head of the tribe and became their captain.

And Jephthah vowed a vow unto the Lord, saying: "If thou shalt without fail deliver the children of Ammon into mine hands, then it shall be, that whatsoever cometh forth of the doors of my house to



JEPHTHAH'S DAUGHTER.

meet me when I return in peace from the children of Ammon shall surely be the Lord's, and I will offer it up for a burnt offering." He attempted to enter into negotiations with Ammon, but without result. He then burst upon the enemy with such decision and fury that he swept them before him, taking twenty towns as his spoil and all the territory in dispute. It was a wonderful victory, yet his life does not take on so much interest from his battles as from his vow. His was an age of vows, as it was an age of false religion. He had learned this false religious vow from the surrounding tribes. You will recall that when Balak brought Balaam to curse Israel, even in Moses' day, the King of Moab asked if he should offer one of his children as a sacrifice.

Jephthah had been poisoned by that religion. He had prayed to God to give him victory, promising that if it were accorded he would offer as a "burnt offering" whosoever should meet him on his return home. He little thought that he would be called upon to offer up his only child, but such was the case. She came to meet him with timbrels and with dances, rejoicing in his victory. With all the woe of the situation upon him, he rent his clothes and cried out: "Alas, my daughter! thou hast crushed me, thou hast crushed me."

She comprehended the situation in a moment. She knew he had made a vow and had won. She saw that she had become the object. She rose grander than ever, and said to him: "Forasmuch as the Lord hath taken vengeance of this upon thine enemies, even the children of Ammon, I am content to die." She asked her father for two months' time, that she might go to Morem with the maidens who had accompanied her on her trip to meet her father. Then came the awful ending recorded by the sacred writer: "He did with her according to his vow." Her loss was everywhere felt, and the maidens of Gilead went out four days in each year to mourn her loss. For more than two thousand years the account of the death of Jephthah's daughter was taken literally. After the eleventh century of the Christian era an attempt was made to change the literal meaning, making it appear that Jephthah's daughter was devoted to the service of God in something the same way as a nun is to-day. This gentle hypothesis was introduced, thinking to save the word of God.

Let us say emphatically that the word of God does not need any defense of this kind. Facts are recorded that we may see them in all



phases of truth. It is true that it was not, in the strictest sense, exactly the customary offering of the times, for ordinarily the victim was taken unwillingly, while here the daughter was perfectly willing to be offered as a sacrifice. The scene excites sympathy; yet what was wrong cannot now be made right, just because we would have it so. No vow of this sort has a place in real religion. It is a mistake. We recognize the grandeur in father and daughter, but that does not redeem the transaction from its horror.

A bad vow is never religious; it is irreligious. It is an act hateful to God. The story here contains the elements which have enchained every age—the elements of love and obedience so pure that nobleness exhausted itself in the sacrifice. It is a pity that this sacrifice closed so brave a life as that of this beautiful girl, blooming like a rose in the royal gardens. The father had been wayward. His life in its beginning was bad. He was about to triumph over envious fortune.

Had Jephthah been under moral restraint, or had the High Priest been present, this vow would never have been made. In that age, far away from sanctuary, “he did what was right in his own eyes.”

Singularly, Jephthah is noted for another thing—for the coining of a word which has served all the ages since. It finds expression in the word “Shibboleth.” When parties have become divided, particularly on religious questions, the thing which separated them is called the “shibboleth” of the party. The occasion of the use of the word in Jephthah’s time is lost in obscurity, hence we do not know whether it refers to “pastures” or “floods.” It was brought about as follows:

After Jephthah’s victories, the tribe of Ephraim, which was large, wealthy and powerful, spoke haughtily to the conqueror. During Gideon’s judgeship, when the same tribe had asked why they had not been notified sooner about certain affairs, he turned their wrath aside with words of wisdom and gentleness. Jephthah differed from Gideon. Being far below the standard of his predecessor in tact, he answered them haughtily and with impulsive words. The feud was embittered with taunts, the meaning of which was plain to them but not to us. Be that as it may, the fugitives of the tribe of Ephraim were caught at the fords of the Jordan and slain. In order to detect which of those crossing the Jordan were fugitives, each one was compelled to pronounce the

word "Shibboleth." The tribe of Ephraim said "Sibboleth," dropping out the first "h." This identified them.

Great bodies have separated because of no more important a thing than the insertion or the dropping of a letter. We ought to think of the life and not the definition of things. Words are not to be compared with character. It is very easy for some to speak their belief, to express their creed. But others, thinking more deeply, cannot do so. The soul and its word are one. Belief for that soul must be stated with the utmost care. In times of controversy the mind is taken from its calm moorings, and as Jephthah cut off forty-two thousand souls because they could not pronounce a word, so are some cut off from genial companionship by the raising of some Shibboleth.

What separates us is not usually vital. It is the unessential. The thing which unites us is the great thing. To say a man is man or a woman a woman allies us to all the race. To say a man is poet or painter, preacher or artisan, separates him into his class. The term man, which is great, unites all in one great brotherhood. The house of sand which the child builds on shore, or the line which it marks with its stick, are both alike leveled by the tide. The house and line are incidents, the fact which unites them is the word shore. The tide or force of events should call us together and should never separate us. No Shibboleth is worth our memory which does not unite mankind.

If Jephthah's life has taught that lesson to us, it has not been lived in vain. The vow by which he is brought most into prominence was a singular feature of his age and grew rank in the idolatrous air. No doubt the beauty of the young life sacrificed to this awful custom served by its shock to show men and women how wrong it was. No doubt in other instances of vowing, the victim was some obscure person and no comment was made. The subject of vows should be scrutinized closely, particularly among the young. No one who desires to be true to himself can make a false vow and keep it. The more false it is, the more apt one is to say it was promised to God, and the worse on that account will be its sacrifice. The consecration of Jephthah's daughter to a false religious idea could never stop the father's aching heart, nor can the world ever cease hearing his words: "Oh! oh! my daughter, thou hast crushed me, thou hast crushed me!"

We see, too, the approach in Hebrew life at this time to some of the features of our European life. So much so that the stories of Sphigenia and Idomeneus are stolen from Jephthah and his daughter, and the deeds of Samson are the classical labors of Hercules. It is not necessary to think this, but rather to see that the human race, wild under pressure, show a common origin by like deeds. This makes literature akin something as the fables of Æsop are akin to the fable or parable of the trees told by Jothan. The things which we read in scripture "were written aforetime for our admonition upon whom the ends of the world have come." This being so, we can look at our Mediæval age and contrast it with this early Mediæval age of the Jewish church. Scholars look on the Mediæval period with a kindly eye. We cannot help doing so with Jephthah and his age. We must remember they had gotten only to this stage: "Thou shalt love thy neighbor and hate thine enemy." The Bible becomes in these facts the book of all ages. It is the book in which the rich and the poor read alike the history of the world. Our own forefathers "buccaneered" and yet believed in God. So we find the Bible writing down impartially the deeds of men who in spite of such acts were led of God. He did not cast them off, but loved them as a father loves his wayward children and fain would have them better. Jephthah was strong, daring and brave. He had noble impulses, but was stained with wrong. His irregular birth also was forgotten in the splendor of his achievement. His name is on the scroll of fame. We would not take it down. Why should we? He **did** the best he could; "angels could do no more."





DELILAH.

## CHAPTER XXVII

### SAMSON; OR THE NAZARITE VOW

BETWEEN the last chapter and the present we skip several pages of history. About all we know is, that the children of Israel did evil many times in the sight of the Lord. Things gradually went from bad to worse. The unsettled condition of the age rendered the open roads not only unpopular by day and insecure by night, but often some old feudal baron descended with an armed retinue and forced tribute. This state of affairs increased until "the highways were unoccupied and the travelers walked through byways."

Samson, the hero of this story, was an early Richard Cœur de Lion. He was known as the eccentric, humorous and brave warrior of the day. There were elements at work in the nation tending to produce a stable government.

Previous to Samson's time, Israel was content to be without a government, even though she suffered much from want of order and systematic discipline. The age of chivalry in Israel, with Samson as a knight-errant, was rapidly approaching. In Jephthah's time an enemy had appeared



IN THE TEMPLE OF DAGON.

from the east and south and would have overpowered Israel had not God intervened. They were now on the verge of a greater downfall even than in Jephthah's time. There had sprung up a new enemy from the extreme west, one who occupied the plains on the Mediterranean nearest to Egypt.

Up to this time the Philistines, for that is the name of the new enemy, had not arisen to eminence or power. But now they possessed both. Their name, "Strangers," indicated a foreign birth, and all things pointed to the fact that they had come from Asia Minor or the islands adjacent—some authorities said they were from Crete, and others said they came from Cyprus. The latter claim seems to have greater foundation, if we may judge by the armor worn. It resembled the Cretans' in pattern and strength, but heavier and ruder. The following quotation gives us the equipment of a Philistine soldier: "And he had an helmet of brass upon his head, and he was armed with a coat of mail; and the weight of the coat was five thousand shekels of brass. And he had greaves of brass upon his legs, and a target of brass between his shoulders. And the staff of his spear was like a weaver's beam; and his spear-head weighed six hundred shekels of iron; and one bearing a shield went before him." They were big and strong, yet considered by their civilized neighbors, the Hebrews, quite slow and stupid.

About this time an angel of the Lord appeared unto the wife of Manoah, of the tribe of Dan, and said: "Drink not wine or strong drink, and eat not any unclean thing, for thou shalt raise a son, and no razor shall come on his head, for the child shall be a Nazarite unto God, and he shall deliver Israel out of the hand of the Philistines." Soon after this the woman bore a son whom she called Samson. The child grew and became a power in the world. He possessed one peculiarity which no other Israelite ever seemed to possess. He was from his very babyhood a witty child. He always saw the funny side of life. No matter how grave a trouble his people or his nation were in, he saw the amusing rather than the sterner side. The Philistines, whom his people so much dreaded, became the butt of his wit and humor.

They, like the Egyptians to the south and the Phœnicians to the north, used chariots in war. Their three original cities were Gaza,



Ascalon, and Jabneel. Their worship indicated that they were originally a maritime people, yet in no sense marine traders. Their principal god was Dagon. It had the body of a fish, with the head and the hands of a man. The temples devoted to their god were designated as the "houses of Dagon." They had another god, called Baal-Zebub, located at Ekron, and known as the "god of the fly." The cities above mentioned were each on a slight eminence and each was ruled by its own prince. Their plains were covered with great cornfields, reaching from the sea almost to the hills of Judah. These people gave Israel their greatest struggle for independence; the contest lasted for centuries. Strange as it may seem, Palestine, which is the Gentile name of the country Philistia, has never been changed.

Israel's "Deliverer," as usual, came from the tribe most troubled—the tribe of Dan. The people of this tribe were shut in from the sea and pressed back against the mountains. They could not go to

Joppa, the nearest seaport, without passing through Philistia. So out of Dan came the future Liberator, whose name was Samson. He was born in Zorah, a town situated on a high hill. His life had a two-fold interest. His birth was the first recorded instance of "the Nazarite vow," and he was to be Israel's "Deliverer." These facts alone give him a peculiar place in history.

The Mediæval Age of the Israelitish nation was an age of vows. That which marked the birth of Samson was not uncommon at the time. In a way it manifested a religious undercurrent. The vow consisted in prohibiting the mother, previous to the birth of the child, from



partaking of any intoxicating drinks, or permitting the child ever to be shorn. Samson was dedicated to God this way. Samson is not the only one whose life is an example of "the Nazarite vow," for we have Elijah and John the Baptist. Like one who has the sign of royal rank, Samson had his in his unshaven beard and uncut hair. The two things which marked him as a Nazarite were the long hair on his head and his abstinence from wine. Notwithstanding his religious birth, he was irregular in his habits, unconventional and full of pranks; yet he kept the vow to the letter.

Josephus says his name meant "strong." But others have said it meant "sunny." If the latter is true, he is an illustration of that sun which the Hebrews delighted to speak of as a "giant rejoicing to run his course and a bridegroom coming forth out of his chamber." His greatest and cruelest deeds were touched with wit, much as the stinging arrow is winged with a series of soft feathers. His laugh rang on the hillside and was heard in the valley—a sign to his despondent countrymen of the coming of a better day. He was a marked contrast to the stolid, coarse and brutal Philistines, whom he routed with his jokes as well as with his strength. His early exploits furnished him the material for his riddles which have colored the literature of all time.

The following is a specimen of one of his jokes in war: He caught three hundred foxes and took firebrands and turned tail for tail together and set them afire and sent them through the stalks of corn. He watched the spreading conflagration with that peculiar interest which only a jovial schemer could produce. On one occasion he slew a thousand Philistines single-handed. He used, as an instrument of war, the jawbone of an ass. This novel weapon afterwards suggested a pun to him which is not easily understood in the English translation. It reads as follows: "With the jawbone of an *ass* have I slain one *mass*, two masses; with the jawbone of an *ass* I have slain an *oxload* of men." The great point of interest to him was in the fact that their clumsy methods could be so easily thwarted. At another time he created a great excitement in Gaza by the manner in which he outwitted the guardsmen of the city gates. The feat was one which for strength and daring has never been equaled. The story runs as follows: When it was told to the Gazites that Samson had come hither, they shut him in and laid wait all night in the city, saying: "When morning comes we

shall kill him." And Samson arose at midnight and took the doors of the gates of the city, and the two posts, and carried them to the top of the hill near Hebron. The great interest lies in the fact that he accomplished this feat before the very eyes of the guardsmen.

Perhaps his *shrewdness* shows itself best in his answer to Delilah, a beautiful but treacherous daughter of a Philistine, whom he had visited on various occasions. The lords of the Philistines, knowing that

Delilah stood in favor with Samson, said: "Entice him and see wherein his great strength lieth, and by what means we may afflict him. In case you find out, every one of us will give you eleven hundred pieces of silver." Samson's answer to Delilah's question furnished him with amusement, as he saw his enemies fall time after time into his trap. They thought they were going to bag *their* game; he knew he would bag *his*. His answers to Delilah are ambuscades for his enemies.

Three times in succession he told her of a method whereby

he could be made weak like other men. After testing them all and failing in each, Delilah still pleaded.

Strange, is it not, that the strongest men are sometimes the weakest? Thus it was with Samson. Delilah's entreaties and words of love, even though false, touched a weak spot in Samson's nature. Looking up into her eyes, he said: "There hath not come a razor upon my head, for I have been a Nazarite unto God. If I be shaven, my strength will be gone and I shall be like other men." Then Delilah made him sleep and called for a man to come and shave off the locks of his head. Immediately his strength went from him.

Then the Philistines put out his eyes and cast him into prison.



SAMSON CARRYING OFF THE GATES OF  
THE CITY.



For this victory they praised their god Dagon and gave a great feast. Soon after, while their hearts were merry, they called for Samson to come and be their jester. The persecutors roared with laughter, both at his actions and his words, "as he made them sport." In the final scene, after his hair began to grow and his strength to return, he said: "O Lord Jehovah, remember me now; and strengthen me now only this once, O God, that I may be avenged of the Philistines for *one* of my two eyes."

And Samson took hold of the two middle pillars, upon which the house of Dagon stood, and said, "Let me die with the Philistines."

The crash of the temple rose into the air, and then there was silence. We know not what followed. When the word opens again we find Eli judging the nation. The interval of silence is not filled up. The Sunny One who sleeps by his father seemed an ending and a beginning. The condition of the Israelites was like an early morning—hard to tell what the day would bring forth.

At Malaneh, in "The Camp of Dan," was located the ancestral burying place of Samson. There, off by the sea, at Gaza, in the temple of Dagon, he died, but was brought back and buried on the spot where he had his first dream of freedom for his people.

Milton says: "I cannot better liken the state and person of a king than to that mighty Nazarite, Samson, who, being disciplined from his birth in the precepts and the practice of temperance and sobriety, grows up to a noble strength and perfection, with those his illustrious sunny locks." And when the light went out forever from the eyes of the great poet, he turns with a high consolation to Samson's life. In his "Samson Agonistes," he writes:

" Samson hath quit himself  
Like Samson, and heroically hath finished  
A life heroic."

## CHAPTER XXVIII

### SAMUEL; OR THE LAST OF THE JUDGES

THE first chapter in the history of the Jewish people, after the death of Samson, opens with Eli in the seat of the judges. We know not how or why he gets there, for he is not of the regular house of the priesthood, and only a member of a younger branch of the family. Rabbinical tradition says the order had been set aside because Phinehas, the High Priest at the time of Jephthah, had approved Jephthah's vow. It is just possible, though, that Eli had distinguished himself

by some deed of valor, becoming by this both High Priest and Judge. Just now, as we glance upon him, he is an old man. The history of the Israelites between his youth and old age is a period of silence.

Eli's home was at Shiloh, the place, as you will remember, where all the tribes went once a year to worship and hold sacred the Passover. At this time there went up every year to worship, a husband and wife by name of Elkanah and Han-

nah. They took an offering and worshiped God with a sincere heart. Elkanah had another wife—an uncommon thing among the people of ordinary rank in life—yet he loved Hannah very much. The family looked forward to the trip to Shiloh with much pleasure, both as a sacred thing and as a feast of joy. They met, year



HANNAH PRAYING IN THE TEMPLE.

after year, people from all parts of the country. Thus their going enabled them to form new acquaintances and renew old friendships.

Hannah had been looked upon at times almost a prophetess, and perhaps altogether a Nazarite. We judge this from what she said to the High Priest Eli: "I have drunk neither wine nor strong drink, but have poured out my soul before the Lord." It is worth while to notice that she is the first person mentioned in the Bible as offering *silent prayer*. She is, also, author of the first hymn of praise to God. Right here it may be of interest to our readers to know that this first hymn of Hannah's is the one upon which the "Magnificat" is modeled. Previous to this, all the songs had been of a national nature. Hannah indicates for the first time in this hymn the coming greatness of the King; whether this be taken in the sense of the Messiah or the ordinary king is not fully known.

Shiloh was beautifully situated on the slopes of a fertile valley. The sanctuary was on an eminence. To reach it one must enter a gateway, supported by two posts. Within were two benches where the High Priest sat and watched the people as they passed up to the sanctuary. Here he often acted in the capacity of judge, and was then said to judge at the gate of the city. One day during the feast of "Tabernacles," Hannah, or Anna as she is sometimes called, sat on one of these benches with her eyes closed and her lips moving in prayer. Eli noticed her attitude, and supposing at first that she had taken too much wine, asked what she was troubled about. She did not tell him minutely what she was praying for, but said she was asking God for a great gift. Then Eli said: "Go in peace, and the God of Israel grant thee thy petition that thou hast asked of Him." Hannah had asked God to give her a son, and said that if He would grant her request she would consecrate her child to the service of God.

This was her prayer, and became a vow which dedicated the unborn son to the life of the Nazarite: "Then I will give him unto the Lord all the days of his life, and there shall no razor come upon his head." In response to that prayer God gave her a babe, whom she called Samuel, which means "Asked of God." Ere long the time came for the family to go again up to Shiloh, as they had done for many years. This time Hannah remained at home, preferring not to go till she could leave Samuel there, a gift to God. "For she said unto her hus-



band: I will not go up until the child is weaned, and then I will bring him, that he may appear before the Lord, and there abide forever."

In the course of time, even when yet a little child, the mother took him up in the family to the temple, saying: "For this child I prayed; and the Lord hath given me my petition; as long as he liveth shall he be lent to the Lord." Here Hannah left him, and each year she went up with the family to Shiloh, taking clothing to him whom she loved. We are told that "Samuel ministered before the Lord, being a child, girded with a linen ephod. Moreover, his mother made him a little coat, and brought it to him from year to year, when she came up with her husband to offer the yearly sacrifice." This motherly love, this devotion of the child priest to the holy temple, makes another chapter in the history of the Israelites, which is very beautiful.



A RUNNER COMING DOWN THE VALLEY.

At the temple Samuel's life ran along smoothly and uneventfully until one day when he was about eight years of age. Then God spoke to him. This incident marks a *new departure* in God's method of instructing people. The interest does not lie in the fact that he spoke to a child, for other incidents of that kind had occurred, but the method employed challenges our attention. He spoke by a "still small voice."

As became the custom afterwards in the great temple in Jerusalem, so here, at Shiloh, the High Priest slept in one of the chambers or tents near the holy place. The only light furnished was that thrown out by the seven-branched candlestick. This was still burning, although it was morning. Samuel, too, was in a deep sleep when, all of a sudden, he heard a voice, and peacefully opened his eyes. He thought Eli had spoken to him, so up he got and ran, saying: "Here am I." Three times was he called, and three times he went to Eli. Then Eli, perceiving that the Lord had called him, said: "My child, it is the Lord's voice, and when He shall speak to you again say: Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth." So when the Lord spoke again, Samuel said: "Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth."

Then God told Samuel of the doom of Eli's house. He said that Eli had not restrained his sons sufficiently, that he had been too indulgent, and that He must punish them. Samuel was so overcome by what he heard, that he kept it to himself until Eli said that God had given him this warning that it might be told to him. Then did Samuel tell of the doom of the family, the church and the nation.

All that Samuel told them came true. He was a prophet. A prophet is a person to whom the Lord tells what He intends to make happen. People paid great attention to what Samuel said, but still many people went on doing wicked things. The people in Shiloh, especially, were very wicked, and God determined to punish them, as well as Eli's sons. The first stroke of ill fortune came from the Philistines, the very enemy which Samson had fought. They met the Israelites at a place called Aphek, near the west end of the pass of Beth-horon. Later on the name was changed to Eben-ezer—a name better known in tradition, history, and song than Aphek.

The Philistines took with them in battle the images of their gods. To offset this, Hophni and Phinehas, the two sons of Eli, took up from Shiloh the sacred Ark. The shout of Israel, always terrible, rang high and strong during the entire battle. The Scriptures, in speaking of the strength of the cheers of Israel, say: "The earth rang again." When the Philistines saw the Ark they asked their people to fight until death overtake them, rather than let the Lord who had humbled Egypt and brought Israel up out of the wilderness come into *their* camp and overpower *them*. These are their words:

"This is a day to decide whether we shall be the slaves of the Hebrews or whether they shall be our slaves. Then fight, O Philistines, for this is a great day."

Down at Shiloh, among the many people anxiously waiting for the news of the day, was the aged Eli, feeble and blind. Here also was his daughter-in-law, the wife of Phinehas, who was expecting the birth of a second son. They had waited all day without returns, but just at evening a runner from the tribe of Benjamin, coming down the valley with a quick stride, clothed in torn garments and with dust sprinkled on his head, showed that disaster had befallen the Israelitish army. In an instant, as in all oriental countries, the city sent out a wail of despair. Eli, who was blind from age, could not see the messenger coming, but sitting on the bench at the gateway of the sanctuary he heard the wailing and knew that the army was defeated. When told that his two sons were slain and that the Ark of God was taken, he fell from the bench and expired. The old man's heart as well as his neck was broken. When the news reached the house of Phinehas, the wife, despairing unto death, called her child "Ichabod,"



SAMUEL AND HIS MOTHER.



for she said: "The glory is departed, for the Ark of God is taken." The Hebrew poets afterwards, referring to this incident, wrote: "Their priests had fallen and their widows made no lamentations."

The Philistines greatly rejoiced over their victory, and prepared at once to take the Ark of God into one of *their* cities. This they did and set it up by the side of Dagon. The next morning they got up early and went into the temple, and to their great surprise they saw that Dagon had fallen from the high place and was lying on his face before the Ark. The Philistines were not sure that it was God who had done this; so they lifted up Dagon and set him in his place.

Again the next morning they rose early, and went into the idol's house. Again Dagon had fallen down upon his face before the ark; and this time his head and his hands were broken off. I do not know whether they mended their idol or whether they set him up again, but God soon made something much worse happen to the Philistines. He sent plagues upon them. The people now began to fear God and said to one another, "What shall we do with the Ark? It shall not stay in this city any longer." So they sent it to another city where some other Philistines lived.

But *they* too fell ill, and a great many died. So the people of that city sent it to another city. The people of the other city were frightened, and said, "We too shall die, now the Ark is brought here." And sure enough, they fell ill and a great many of them died.

At last the Philistines thought they would send the Ark back to the Israelites; yet they did not feel entirely sure that the God of Israel had been angry with them for keeping the Ark, so the Philistine priests studied over it awhile, and finally said to their people: "Let us prove whether these calamities are of God or not." Then they suggested that they make a cart, and on it place the Ark, and hitch before it two milch cows on which no yoke had ever before been placed, and with an offering to the God of Israel for their offense against Him, turn the cows out and see where they would go. They said: "If the cows go up to Israel, then we shall know that the plagues are from God. If they go not up, then we shall know that the plagues have come by chance."

So the Philistines did as the priests told them. They took two cows that had never drawn a cart before, tied them to a cart and shut

up their calves. They said: "No one shall drive the cows and we will see what they will do. If the cows leave their calves and go to the place where the Israelites live, then we shall be quite sure that it was God who brought the trouble upon us."

To their great surprise the cattle took the highway, straight up to Beth-shemesh, on the border-land of Israel. On the cattle went, no



BRINGING BACK THE ARK.

one guiding them, until they came to "the field of Joshua." Here beside a great stone they stopped.

It was the harvest season, a time when the earth was resplendent with glory. When the people who were reaping their wheat lifted up their eyes and beheld the Ark, they greatly rejoiced, and going over to the cart, which stood beside the natural altar, they took down the Ark and split the wood of the cart into fuel and offered a sacrifice unto God.

When the five princes of Philistia who had walked reverently behind the cart saw this, they returned to their own country much surprised and subdued. Soon after the men of Beth-shemesh sent word to the priests of the Lord at Kirjath-jearim, saying: "The Philistines have brought again the Ark of the Lord; come ye down and fetch it up to you." Then they came and bore it up through the hills and lodged it in the house of Abinadab. Here it at last rested after an absence of seven months. "It came to pass while the Ark was at

Kirjath-jearim that the time was long; for it was twenty years, and all the house of Israel lamented after the Lord."

The sanctuary, as well as the temple and the town of Shiloh where the Ark had previously rested, was a desolation and a ruin. It had not only been plundered by invaders, but a fire and the sword had done a fearful work. The horrors of many succeeding events throw a silence over our narrative and we know not all that happened. We know, though, that Shiloh ceased to exist when the Ark was taken away. The Tabernacle under which the Ark had rested so many years was taken first to Nob and then to Gibeon. The vines for a time clambered over the charred ruins of Shiloh and then all was desolation. "Thou shalt see thine enemy in my habitation," was the fulfilled word of God. "I will do to this house as I have done to Shiloh," was the standard by which all things were punished. This loss involved the loss of supremacy by the great tribe of Ephraim. They went down in the ruins of Shiloh. The overthrow marks the end of the first period of the Jewish nation. A *new* era was about to begin. The last we saw of Samuel he was a little child at Shiloh, talking with God. Where was he now? What had become of him? Shall we find him a full-grown man, loving God and working for Him? Yes, we shall find him—second only to Moses in the history of the Jewish church.



## CHAPTER XXIX

### SAMUEL; OR THE FATHER OF A NEW SCHOOL SYSTEM

"THE house of Israel lamented after the Lord." In the midst of Israel's sorrow Samuel again appeared. He had now grown to manhood and was well known to the people. He had not as yet been looked upon as a judge, for he had not yet delivered the people from any trouble; but the national hope was beginning to center about him.

The period which was drawing to a close had been a period of wandering faith, and consequently of danger. The judges were looked upon with awe; they were supposed to dwell apart from the public and to possess virtues surpassing the average man. The period of judgeship was rapidly approaching an end. The people began to long for a permanent government. Thoughtful men were seriously thinking upon this subject. They examined well the affairs of those nations ruled by kings, and were forced to see that often they, even with less numbers than themselves, had conquered *them*, because they had not been united.



SAMUEL PRAYING AND OFFERING SACRIFICE.

The question now with them was, could Israel have a central government—a king—for example? Could it have all the glories of art,

inventions, and civilization, and still be true to God? All other nations were idolaters; would *they* rise or would they sink if they passed over to what seemed to be a more earthly form of government?

Five hundred years were encompassed in the settlement of this question, and doubtless many more years would have been consumed had not Samuel, the prophet, come to their rescue. By his quick perception and ready sympathy, he not only stood between the past and the present, but stood between the living and the dead. Samuel was a true Nazarite. He stood alone in the world. He dressed in a linen ephod; his hair, on which no razor had fallen, fell down over his shoulders; he drank no strong drink. In these things he was so different from other men of the time that it made of him a striking figure. He was the last of that remarkable line of men known as the judges. Having suddenly appeared, like an apparition, after his long disappearance from Shiloh, he warned the people against idolatry. They hearkened to him, and when they had put away their idols he convened an assembly at Mizpah.

While gathered there they asked Samuel to pray for them. His prayer was piercing, shrill, and high. It seemed as if by his very earnestness he would reach the kingdom of heaven. Just as they were offering sacrifice and calling upon God, the Philistines came up and attacked them. The people were stricken with terror and beseeched Samuel not to cease crying to God. All of a sudden a great storm broke upon the Philistines. An earthquake shook and broke the land, and thunder and lightning made wild the elements. The Philistines fled in dismay and Israel regained all the territory it had previously lost. The cities down to the very sea were regained. The Israelites experienced no more trouble from the Philistines during all the judgeship of Samuel.

About twenty years had elapsed since Israel had lost the battle deciding the fate of Shiloh. The Israelites now erected a great stone, naming it Eben-ezer—"the stone of help"—as a memorial of victory. This battle, the first and last of Samuel's life, so far as we know, raised him to the position of Judge. He now dwelt in Ramah, his native home, making it a sanctuary, which remained the religious capital of the nation during his life. Samuel made a circuit of the holy places, Bethel, Gilgal, Mizpah and Jericho, judging the people "in all

those places." But he always returned to Ramah, "for there was his house and there he judged Israel and there he built an altar unto the Lord."

In time he married and had two sons. When they grew up they shared his office at the far-off sanctuary of Beersheba. They were not true judges like Samuel, for they exacted bribes and created scandals. Samuel alone was the oracle of whom men inquired God's will. As Samuel's age advanced, the people learned to reverence him as never before. Even long ages after his death, men looked back upon his memory with a respect similar to that which they felt for Moses. Like Moses, when he departed this life, he gave the people a consoling legacy—a promise that he would pray to God for them. During his life he was often known to pray all night for God's blessing upon his people. No solemn or joyous occasion was complete without his presence, yet when he came, the people knew not whether he came to correct or to bless. So they frequently asked first of all: "Comest thou in peace?" "Peaceably I am come, to sacrifice unto the Lord. Sanctify yourselves, and come with me to the sacrifice."

In connection with the office of Judge, Samuel held another office—that of a Prophet. He stood as God's ambassador. "The Lord revealed himself to Samuel," are the precious words which show us the close relationship of Samuel to God. Samuel wore long hair, and God is supposed to have put aside the hair from the ear and spoken words to him in secret. Thus it was said: "The Lord uncovered his ear." "I am the seer," was his answer, to those who asked, "Where is the seer?" But he was more than *seer*—he was the "Prophet," or *one that spoke for God*.

The word "Prophet" means a spokesman. In Exodus iv. 16 God said to Moses: "Aaron shall be thy prophet." That meant, he should be spokesman for Moses, when the two brothers appeared before Pharaoh. Previous to the time of Samuel, the Prophet had been only an occasional figure in Israel. Now he became a fixed institution. Samuel was the founder of the *Order of Prophets*. Before this the holy men were "Seers" or "Gazers." From Samuel's day the succession of prophets remained unbroken till the day of Malachi.

The manner of prophesying depended on a call from God. A call from God was higher than a call from priest, church, council, or king,



and was confined to no class of men, Prophets were called from among peasants as well as from among kings; they included women as well as men. They were the refuge of the oppressed and no power was able to suppress them. Every mean thing feared them; every needy one rejoiced in them.

Later on, a school was formed to train prophets. The person at the head of the school was called "father." All students were simply dressed, all took the Nazarite vow, and all had their food in common.

It was an exceptional circumstance in the life of a prophet if he were not brought up in such a school. "And Amaziah said unto Amos, O thou seer, go flee thee away into the land of Judah, and there eat bread and prophesy there. But prophesy not any more again at Bethel, for it is the king's sanctuary and it is the house of the kingdom." Amaziah, who was a priest, was inclined to belittle Amos, because the latter had not been educated in a prophets' school. He addressed him as "seer," and not as "prophet," and told him to go to districts where there were no schools and prophesy. But Amos replied, saying: "I was no prophet, neither was I a prophet's son, but I was an herdsman, and a gatherer of wild figs. And the Lord took me as I followed the flock, and the Lord said unto me: Go prophesy unto my people Israel." Amos' call came from God, though he had never been to school. The prophets usually dwelt in huts, formed from branches of trees. Some, however, lived in towns and in houses of their own.

Great or higher prophets had inferior ones to assist them. Moses was assisted by Joshua. Elijah was attended by Elisha, and he in turn by Gehazi. Many of them were married and had families. The form or manner of teaching changed with the demands of the age. There were exceptions to the rule, but the prophets were usually poets and were frequently so called. Poetry was deemed a gift and a vehicle of the divine thought. The greatest truths were set forth in poetic form. We see this as far back as the songs of Moses and Miriam. This was often aided by the musical instrument which found a prominent place in the schools of Samuel.

In these schools were educated the first authors—those who wrote the first books which descended to other generations. We scarcely know in detail any of the things taught, yet we see the effects. They fostered patriotism and religion. When Saul came up, looking for his

father's cattle, he was caught in the enthusiasm and goodness of it, and when the men missed him they said: "Is Saul also among the prophets?" How happy the greatness of a school whose atmosphere makes men greater! The influences coming from them are wider spread than lectures or books, and work a power which passes from man to man and woman to woman more glorious than everything else in the world.

It occurred to Samuel that as Ramah was made holy by an institution of holy men, other places might be the same. Building up men and women was building up empires. He started his schools to make men good. The prophets and the schools made Israel differ from all the Asiatics of the past and present, even different from



"FLEE THEE INTO JUDAH, AND PROPHESY THERE."

the learned and progressive Greeks. Priest, church and king, brought the Israelites into the art of civilization, yet these institutions did the same for other nations. In Egypt and China we have the evidence of the same established order, forbidding them to go backward, but in a forward direction, thus establishing fixity against decay or progress. The only thing which saved Israel from just such a fate was the "Order of the Prophets."

As the direct instrument of the Almighty, higher than kings and government, the prophet ever spoke *that word* which delivered the

oppressed and made men free. It was impossible for the Jew to become stagnant. If the nation needed a new thought of any sort, God put it in the mind of some one of his prophets. He told his boldest to proclaim it. In this way the work of reform was ever in progress. No stagnation could come where a prophet of God abode. Whenever the prophet hesitated to reveal God's message, God would say to him: "Be not afraid of them; be not afraid of their faces; be not afraid of their words. Speak my words unto them, whether they will hear or whether they will forbear."

The test of the principle taught by Samuel in his school, was singularly put on trial in his own life. The people wondered how it would affect the father of colleges and statesmen, how he would behave in the crisis; whether he would seek the wisdom of God, which had so far directed him, or whether he would say that an order which was good enough for to-day should not be disturbed by to-morrow's needs.

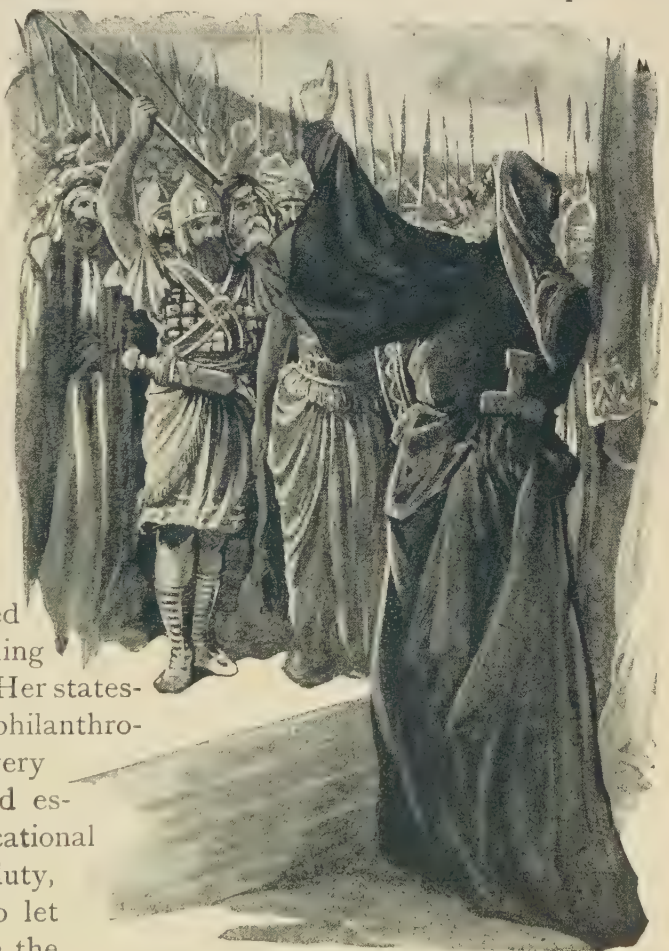
Samuel was equal to the emergency. The prophet changed when he saw the need of change, and even modeled the nation to the change. In lieu of a public press, higher than any press, the Prophet, by God's advice, always made the nation free. That is the true sphere of all schools. It must ever prepare the pupil for the nation's need. The nation's need is the plan of God. The nursery and the "Little Red School House" are the home of the nation. There boys and girls can be trained to follow God. Samuel, the great leader, filled with great ideals, put them in *his* schools, and we have to-day a revived nation, a new race of men and women.



## CHAPTER XXX

### SAMUEL; OR THE LAST OF THE PROPHETS

SAMUEL'S work created a current in the slow-running stream of Israel's life. He was independent of conditions and made independent thought possible among the people. He brought forth new conditions, which gave the people power to judge between the temporary and the eternal. The British government in India is to-day doing that which will make Hindoostan self-governing, and perhaps in time independent. This is shown by the improvements which are being inaugurated and which are nothing short of stupendous. Her statesmen, soldiers, and philanthropists are straining every nerve to this end, and especially so in educational matters. If we do our duty, we can rest content to let the future bring forth the fruit.



SAMUEL ADDRESSING THE PEOPLE.

Samuel's work fitted the people for a broader view of things. Unfortunately, he lost his position as "judge" by educating the people

to something better, yet this mattered not to him. He was not looking after self; he was looking after the nation. He became through his own good and noble ideas the last of that great race of men known as the judges. Samuel, too, was beginning to grow old. The people observed it with sorrow. They saw that when he was gone there would be no one to take his place as judge of the nation. His two sons, stationed at the outpost of the country, in the town of Beersheba, had proven unworthy. They did not love God. This was in marked contrast to Samuel. He had been more than an officer; he had been a father to the people. His own pure principles had made it impossible for his sons to succeed him. He enjoyed the distinction of having educated the people in such a manner as to be no longer satisfied with the judgeship. It was too limited in its power to meet the demands of the new and growing thought of scholars and patriots. To bring all of the old that was worthy into the new conditions was his lifework.

He who is able to bridge two epochs must be spiritually great. No one can pass from one to the other without a shock. A great man, though, does not shrink from duty because of that. George Washington, when told by a clergyman that his course would lead to separation from the mother land, indignantly denied it, because he loved England with a love which could not be measured—yet when once he saw the final issue, he did not shrink from it. George Washington was unconsciously being led to new things, and when they came he met them manfully.

When the people of Israel asked Samuel to give them a king he was sorrowful, yet he realized that he himself had prepared them for this very thing. A kingdom and a king were needed to meet the needs of the hour, and the growing thought of the nation. Inspired writers, in speaking of it, say: "And it came to pass when Samuel was old, that he made his sons judges over Israel. And his sons walked not in his ways, but turned aside after lucre, and took bribes and perverted judgment. Then all the elders of Israel gathered themselves together and came to Samuel, unto Ramah, and said unto him: Behold, thou art old, and thy sons walk not in thy ways; now make us a king to judge us like all the nations. But the thing displeased Samuel, when they said: Give us a king to judge us. And Samuel prayed unto the Lord."

We are told that he did not sleep that night; that he was perplexed



THE VILLAGE OF SHUNEM AND MOUNT GILEAD.

and in doubt and that he fasted. Visions of peril came to him. And he said to the people: "This will be the manner of the king that shall rule over you. He will take your sons and appoint them for himself, for his chariot, and to be his horsemen; and some shall run before his chariots. And he will appoint him captains over thousands and captains over fifties and will set them to ear his ground, and to reap his harvest, and to make his instruments of war, and instruments of his chariots. And he will take your daughters to be confectioners and cooks and bakers. And he will take your fields, and your vineyards, even the best of them, and give them to his servants. And he will take the tenth of your seed and of your vineyards, and give to his officers, and to his servants. And he will take your men-servants and your maid-servants and your goodliest young men and your asses and put them to his work. He will take a tenth of your sheep; and ye shall be his servants. And ye shall cry out in that day because of your king which ye shall have chosen you; and the Lord will not hear you in that day."

When Samuel had finished telling them these things they still in-



sisted that they wanted a king. Samuel told the Lord all these things, who replied, saying: "Hearken unto the voice of the people and make them a king." Then Samuel dismissed them, saying: "Go ye every man unto his city." This was the dark side and the only side which he at first saw, but it did not last long. He soon accepted the change with a willing heart. When he met the future ruler, it was with a cordiality minus all restraint—nay, even joyful in its nature. During the coronation, no word from him marred the occasion. The joy of the people was unchecked. In his farewell address he said: "God forbid that I should sin against the Lord by ceasing to pray for you; but I will teach you the good and right way." In this trying time of tradition he was no doubt misunderstood and misrepresented. A man who carries a nation from point to point cannot hope to please either the conservative or the radical. He generally goes too far for the first and not far enough for the latter. He says too much for the former and not enough for the latter.

Such men as Samuel reconcile men; they turn the hearts of the children to the fathers, and the hearts of the fathers to the children. Such memories are nobler monuments than brass or marble. A nation's respect is more than unjust applause or partisan praise. When Samuel laid down his office of Judge, he still held the higher office of Prophet. Before people and king he could worthily say: "There is none holy as the Lord; for there is none beside thee; neither is there any rock like our God." This was the song the mother sang when he was born, and became his philosophy during life. When he rebuked the people and the king, he did it from no ambitious motive, but for their good, just as he spoke to Eli when a child.

The acts of Samuel, which in certain instances have been questioned by men, are things to be considered in a broad sense. He talked to the people in the following manner: "Hath the Lord as great delight in burnt offerings and sacrifices as in obeying the voice of the Lord? Behold, to obey is better than sacrifice, and to hearken than the fat of rams. For the sin of witchcraft is rebellion, and iniquity and idolatry are stubbornness." That is the keynote of his life, and the salvation of all life—national, church, and individual; obedience is better than ceremony. Ceremony has its place—a great place too—but it must not serve to disobey God. Samuel never knew anything else. God came

to him as a child; he obeyed as a child. With each succeeding demand, God came. He always replied: "Speak, Lord, for thy servant heareth." He did not have a sudden conversion in which great zeal and tremendous energy were displayed, as if to efface and make up for past delinquency. He obeyed. His life was the type of holiness which had no conversion. It was like the growth of a great tree. "He shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in



VIEW OF MODERN JERICHO.

his season; his leaf also shall not wither, and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper."

But we must not think because he was calm, growing from age to age into maturer strength, that he did not suffer. When as a Judge he was commanded to utter the doom of one high in the state, he mourned so long that God asked him: "Why mournest thou after him?" He bruised his own heart many times because justice compelled him to punish severely. Without him, the nation, like a great ship, would have run on a rocky shore, and the seething surf as it broke on the ledge would have been heard in all time to come. But this was not to be, for alone in a quiet place a child became the receptacle of God's secrets. In him was school, reform, church and new life. This is the restful, beautiful, and great story that all the world should study, and when studying they

will recall first the mother's words: "For this child I prayed and the Lord hath given me the petition which I asked of him. Therefore also have I lent him to the Lord."

The second point which the world should study is:

"Behold, I am old and gray-headed and I have walked before you from my childhood unto this day. Behold, here am I; witness against me before the Lord." He had taken no man's cattle, accepted no man's bribe—not even so much as a sandal. He came before the assembled people with clean hands and a pure heart—they said with one voice that he was pure. And he said to them: "God forbid that I should sin against the Lord in ceasing to pray for you; but I will teach you the good and right way." When he died the whole nation lamented—and why not? It had lost a father. They buried him in the place where he was born. The nation stood by his tomb.



## CHAPTER XXXI

### SAUL; OR THE FIRST KING OF ISRAEL

SAUL, the first king of Israel, is so well known in Jewish history that every detail of his life and family connection has been handed down to us. He was born within the borders of Benjamin, and while the actual place is not known, yet it is supposed to be in the town of Zelah, where the family had its burying ground. His father was a powerful, influential, and wealthy chief. Saul first comes into view in a most singular way. A drove of his father's asses had strayed away and were supposed to have been lost somewhere in the mountains. Saul, accompanied by a trusty family servant, had gone at his father's bidding to find them.



SAUL INQUIRING THE WHEREABOUTS OF THE SEER.

He and the servant had been in search of them for three days, but without result, when all of a sudden they came to a hill, on the summit and upper sides of which was a town. Saul thought it was useless to hunt further, and suggested that they be-

gin their journey home; but the servant said that since the town on the hill was that of the Seer, it might be well to consult *him* regarding the whereabouts of the animals. To this Saul assented. They then hastened onward, taking with them a present, which consisted of a quarter of a silver shekel, equivalent to about twelve and one-half cents in our

money. Before entering the city they came to a well. Here they met some of the village maidens who had come hither to draw water. They inquired of the young women the whereabouts of the Seer, and learned that he was in the city, and that they had best wait and intercept him as he came out. They said he was sure to do this, for a sacrifice outside was waiting for his blessing.

The two men then waited by the gate and watched for the prophet. Saul and the servant had never met Samuel, neither had Samuel seen them. God, however, had already prepared Samuel for the meeting by telling him of the future destiny of the young Benjamite and the exact location where he would meet him. So, while Saul and the servant were surprised at Samuel's language toward them, and more especially at his invitation to be present at the feast, yet *he*, in turn, was not the least surprised or embarrassed. They, however, accepted his invitation. Samuel had given instructions to the cook prior to this, to prepare for a distinguished guest. In compliance, the cook had specially prepared a boiled shoulder. Saul, with his servant, was assigned the chief seat, and as honored guest, was asked to tear off the first bit from the specially prepared meat. After the feast, Saul was invited to Samuel's home, where a bed had been prepared for him on the housetop. Strange thoughts must have crowded into his brain at this time, but as he had had three arduous days of search, he quickly fell asleep, not dwelling upon the events.

At the break of day Samuel touched him on the shoulder. Immediately Saul and his servant arose and went with Samuel to the limits of the town. Here Samuel requested the servant to leave them alone for a little time. When the servant had passed on, Samuel produced a horn of oil, and pouring it on the head of Saul announced to him that he was to be the future king of Israel. Then he kissed him as if he were his son, conferring on him all the titles of a ruler. Thus it was that Saul, in his work-day dress and in the midst of his routine work of life, was consecrated to the highest rank of the Israelitish nation.

In order that Saul might know his fortune was of God, Samuel gave him three tests. First, he said that when he reached the tomb of Rachel while on his way home he would meet two men who would tell him that the asses were found; second, he said that when he reached "the Oak of Tabor" he would meet three men carrying gifts up to

Bethel, and that these gifts would be kids, bread, and wine, and that two of the loaves would be offered to *him*; third, he said that by the hill of God, he would meet a company of prophets, and that at this place the spirit of God would come upon *him* and he would become a new man. These were the things that were to come in the order named and be to him as signs that the call, which he and the prophet alone knew of, was from God.

This secret neither Samuel nor Saul divulged. In the meantime, a national assembly was convened at Mizpeh, where lots were cast to decide *what* tribe was to produce the future king. When Saul from out of the tribe of Benjamin was named, the people shouted for the first time in all their history: "God save the King!" When Saul, who had now arrived, heard it, he hid among the baggage which formed the outer circle of the encampment. He had a shyness that was painful. He could not even endure the gaze of the people. He was so unsophisticated in the ways of the world, and so un-



"LOTS WERE CAST TO DECIDE WHAT TRIBE WAS TO PRODUCE THE FUTURE KING."



accustomed to caring even for himself, that his father mourned for him as lost when he went out alone and sought the cattle which had strayed. Saul often turned to his servant and asked what should be done at a point where search seemed hopeless. His meeting, even with Samuel, was by the servant's thoughtfulness and not his own.

Saul could not believe that he had been elected king, and asked: "Am not I a Benjamite? of the smallest of the tribes of Israel? and my family the least of all the families of the tribe of Benjamin? Wherefore then speakest thou so to me?" There is something even of rudeness in his shyness. For when Samuel had told him of his kingship, he turned his great shoulder to him, as much as to say he would not have it. And then again when he became a prophet, the people said in surprise: "Is Saul also among the prophets?" On the day of his coronation some said: "How shall this man save us? And they despised him and brought him no presents."

But when he went down to his home at Gibeah there went with him a band of men whose heart God had touched. But of Saul, himself, it is said: "He was as though he had been deaf." All was so unexpected. He felt more at home back in his father's fields, driving the oxen, plowing the ground and reaping the grain. He overlooked the fact that his simple nature was great in God's sight. There was not among the children of Israel a goodlier person than he. Moreover, he possessed great dignity and height. Samuel could well say: "See ye him, look at him whom the Lord hath chosen, that there is none like him among all the people." His stately, graceful form gave to him the name of "The Wild Roe" or "Gazelle." It was at once expressive of strength, dignity and beauty.

Among their enemy, the Philistines, there were many giants. So a giant king naturally met the situation and the thoughts at the time.

Saul had no great wealth, yet he needed little, for he lived at his home in Gibeah—a place known as "Gibeah of Benjamin," but afterwards in honor of the king changed to "Gibeah of Saul."

His kingship was soon put to the test. One evening as he was returning from his labor in the field he heard a wailing cry. This, according to oriental custom, meant disaster. Saul asked what caused the people to weep. When told that Ammon, the old enemy which Jephthah had conquered, had made advances upon the territory belong-

ing to the tribe living on the east of Jordan, he was aroused, and being no longer the bashful boy that he was, he took two oxen from the herd, slew them and sent portions of the bones to the tribes of Ammon, saying:



“Whosoever cometh not forth after Saul and after Samuel, so shall it be done unto his oxen.”

The nation, led by the king, rose to a man and conquered Ammon. This so pleased the people that, with one accord, they all went to Gilgal and there they made Saul king and renewed the kingdom by making sacrifice and peace offerings. Gilgal, you will remember, was the first

foot of land gained by Joshua after he crossed the Jordan. The sanctuary had been deserted. The heights of Benjamin and the passes leading to them were in the hands of the Philistines. Saul stood during his inauguration like a great one of old; his gigantic spear in hand, his bodyguard of six hundred about him. "And now, behold, the king walketh before you: and I am old and gray headed; and, behold, my sons are with you: and I have walked before you from my childhood unto this day. Behold, here I am: witness against me before the Lord, and before his anointed: whose ox have I taken? or whose ass have I taken? or whom have I defrauded? whom have I oppressed? or of whose hand have I received any bribe to blind mine eyes therewith? and I will restore it you.

"And they said, Thou hast not defrauded us, nor oppressed us, neither hast thou taken ought of any man's hand.

"Now, therefore, behold the king whom ye have chosen, and whom ye have desired! and, behold, the Lord hath set a king over you. If ye will fear the Lord, and serve him, and obey his voice, and not rebel against the commandment of the Lord, then shall both ye and also the king that reigneth over you continue following the Lord your God. Moreover, as for me, God forbid that I should sin against the Lord in ceasing to pray for you: but I will teach you the good and the right way. Only fear the Lord, and serve him in truth with all your heart: for consider how great things he hath done for you."

All this time the heart of the leader was full of sorrow and he gave way to tears at the sad plight of his land. To this note of woe, Jonathan, his spirited son, added keen lament. From this time forward Jonathan never left his father's side. He brilliantly attacked a Philistine garrison stationed near his post, and for his courage and bravery won hosts of friends. The invasion which followed Jonathan's blow was severe and terrible. It left Israel in a worse condition than ever before. But as he had brought it on, he determined to deliver the people from it. He decided upon a plan and shouldered the entire responsibility. He set a day to carry it out, and told no one of the plan except his armor-bearer, who was a brave and loyal fellow.

One day, as the Philistine troops held an intrenched position, overlooking the pass of Michmash, Jonathan spoke to his companion, saying: "Come, let us go over to the garrison of the Philistines. It may be that



Jehovah will work for us, for there is no restraint to Jehovah to save by many or by few." Jonathan's words breathed the true faith.

His armor-bearer replied: "Do all that is in thine heart; look back at me; lo, I am with thee; as thy heart, is my heart." Since Jonathan had no opportunity to consult priest or prophet, he decided it would be best to act as the conduct of the enemy suggested. If the enemy threatened to descend, he would remain below. If, on the other hand, they challenged him, he would go up. At the dawn of the day,



the two brave men emerged from the shadows of the rocks and stood clearly defined. The Philistines thought some fugitive Hebrews were coming out of the caves or hiding places, and scoffed at them, saying: "Come up and we will show you a thing."

So Jonathan, of whom it is said he was swifter than an eagle and stronger than a lion, said to his armor-bearer, "Come up after me, for the Lord hath delivered them into the hands of Israel." And Jonathan climbed up upon his hands and knees, and his armor-bearer after him. Jonathan, as you will recall, was a Benjamite. This tribe were noted as mighty archers. Jonathan, himself, was as great a bowman as our

armor-bearer after him. Jonathan, as you will recall, was a Benjamite. This tribe were noted as mighty archers. Jonathan, himself, was as great a bowman as our

old frontiersmen were great as rifle shots. Jonathan was called the champion bowman of his tribe. When they came to a point where the enemy was fully before them they began to discharge their arrows, throw stones from their crossbows, and sling pebbles from their slings. They soon had the enemy in a panic; twenty of the Philistines had been slain. The panic spread to the camp. An earthquake coming at the same time immediately changed the face of things. There were also many Israelitish prisoners in the camp. These all arose, taking part in the fight for freedom. The people also hiding in the neighborhood joined the forces of Israel.

King Saul, from whom all things had been kept a secret, saw the confusion from the heights of Gibeah, and came down the mountain side like the boiling and rushing waters of a sudden storm. He with all Israel greatly rejoiced over the wonderful victory. The Philistines did not recover from the shock for many a day.

There was now much for Saul to do, for the Philistines were again in the very heart of the country. They had entire control of every shop and would allow no armor or arms to be made for the Israelites. Saul had armor and arms, so had his son Jonathan, but when the Philistine giants appeared before Israel fully panoplied, the sight was so strange and all-powerful that they lost heart, fearing no sword or spear of *theirs* could touch the heavy armed enemy. In the meantime, a part of the Israelites hid away in caves, mountains and forests. Some even crossed the Jordan and went to the land of Gad. When the remnants came forth, the Philistines said in derision, as if the people were human rats: "Behold, the Hebrews come out of the holes where they have hid themselves."

About this time a standing army began to appear. Abner, a prince in every sense of the word, was made "Captain of the Host." A body-guard for the king was selected from his own tribe. They were men of beauty and stature. Royal marks also at this time began to designate the king's person. He kept his spear always near him; he wore a golden bracelet on his arm and a diadem on his helmet; he made his power felt in every direction and his land was full of song. He was now more than fulfilling the expectation of the people's hope of a king. But we are sorry to say that in the midst of all this power his downfall came, and it is this which makes his life a pathos in history. Per-

haps, though, it is not strange, for Saul met a king's lot while looking for the material things of life. He had a heart given to him suddenly—not one fully leavened by the spirit of God. At times he wavered.

We observe this in the naming of his children. They were sometimes named in honor of Jehovah and sometimes after the heathen gods. He mingled superstition with religion. When he came within range of holy associations he was caught up into holy things.

Saul was warned by Samuel not to proceed to inaugurate

kingly duties unless *he*

himself was present to

instruct him. Saul

either forgot this injunction, or else he

had decided to take

full power in his

own hands. On

one occasion he was

about to go to battle

with the Philistines

without a sacrifice. As

a king, he had the right

to sacrifice. But in doing

so he disobeyed Samuel's

injunction "to wait for

him." Obedience, says

the prophet, is better than

sacrifice. At last God chose to see whether Saul would do what He desired him to do. There were some wicked people living near the land of Canaan, called Amalekites. God was displeased with them.

One day Samuel came to Saul, and said, "God commands you to go and fight against the Amalekites and kill them all."

Saul got a great army of Israelites together and went and conquered them. Then Saul ordered his soldiers to kill them all with their swords except the king. Saul thought he should like to take the king back to Canaan with him. I suppose he thought it would be a fine



THE YOUTH FELL A VICTIM TO THE HATRED OF  
THE POOR KING.



thing to have a king shut up in prison near him. Neither did Saul kill the fat and strong oxen and sheep; he only killed those that were thin and weak. Saul wished to be rich.

That night God spoke to Samuel and said that he was much displeased with Saul, and to go and tell him many things. When Saul saw Samuel he pretended to be glad to see him, and said, "I have done the commandment of the Lord." Then Samuel said, "What is this bleating of sheep and lowing of oxen I hear?" Saul now saw that it would be of no use to say that he had not saved the sheep and oxen, so he began to make excuses. Then Samuel told him that God was angry with him and did not intend he should be king much longer.

Saul was frightened when he heard that God would punish him, and said, "Stay and pray to God with me." But Saul was not really sorry; he was only afraid of being punished. Samuel knew this and would not stay. Saul was terrified by Samuel's words and clung convulsively to the robe of the prophet, which was rent in his hands. Then Samuel said, "As this garment is torn, so shall thy kingdom be torn away from thee." And so it was. God had already given it to a man better than he.

Although Samuel was stern as a prophet, he was tender as a man, and mourned for the king. Saul was always breaking out in wrong directions. Deprived by his unholy conduct of heavenly communication, he tried to get communication through wizards and necromancers. In the midst of these things the shadow of that thing began to appear which has been called "religious madness." The dark malady grew. A disordered mind works on a disordered path. More and more frequently the passion of darkness came upon him; then again the sweet light of early days returned and he was able to prophesy.

Into the mad king's life came a sweet and strong young man to charm him from insanity to the sunshine of clear thinking. This youth entered the dark court—dark with sorrow—came with music, poetry and song. Yet in helping, he unconsciously fell a victim to the hatred and the jealousy of the poor king. Jonathan was so loyal to his father that he could believe no evil of him. Often he would say to David: "My father will do nothing, great or small, but that he will show it me; and why should my father hide this thing from me? It is not so." Jonathan followed the fortunes of the declining house even unto

death. During Saul's madness the Philistines gathered once more for battle. They cast their camp on the plain of Esdraelon, where they could best maneuver their chariots of war. Their headquarters were at Shunem, on the slope of Moreh.

Israel followed the old plan. They stood on the heights of Gilboa. Their soldiers were all footmen. It was almost, if not exactly, on the ground where Gideon had camped by "the well of trembling."

But the two leaders differed. "Saul when he saw the camp of the Philistines was afraid and his heart trembled exceedingly." There



THE FOUNTAIN OF GIDEON—PLACE WHERE SAUL PITCHED HIS CAMP.

was nothing to cheer him. He had shut out the young shepherd and his inspiring songs from his life. When he inquired of God he was not answered. He was alone.

The following day the Philistines charged up the hill and there, on Gilboa, "the pride of Israel was slain."

The details are broken. A full description of the battle is not given. At last the king was alone. Around him flew the arrows, about him pressed the enemy. His three sons lay dead. His armor-bearer was

also dead at his feet. He himself was a tired, wounded, broken-down man, but still a king. The crown was on his head, the bracelet was on his arm. His shield, polluted, stained with blood and marred by blows, was cast aside, but the gigantic spear was still in his hand. He rocked and swayed as he leaned upon it. He had received mortal wounds and the shock made him feel the darkness of oncoming events. While in this condition, a robbing Amalekite came up and finished the work of death.

Saul's madness was at last over. The next day the Philistines found his body. The news was proclaimed in Gath and Askelon. When the men of these cities heard it they said that Goliath was more than avenged. They sent the arms of the king and those of his sons through their cities, and finally placed them in the temple at Bethshan near the field of battle. There also on the walls were fastened the dead bodies of the heroes.

The town of Jabesh-Gilead, you will remember, had been saved by Saul. These people did not forget him in death. Quickly they sent forth an armed company, who at dead of night took down the bodies of their king and princes and buried them. Near by those graves Abner rallied the royal house, and at Mahanaim, where Jacob met the camp of angels, he established a new sanctuary.

Abner gradually won back the territory for the house of Saul. Ishbosheth was the next in line of descent and assumed the crown. But having unworthy suspicions of Abner, he drove him to the court of David. Saul was dead. To David the hero shepherd we turn for the funeral elegy of the fallen king. His words are humane, noble and kind. "How are the mighty fallen and the weapons of war perished!" The song of David was not only sung over the dust of the dead he loved, but has been sung over the dust of countless numbers since.



## CHAPTER XXXII

### DAVID; OR THE SHEPHERD HERO

THE history of David, the hero shepherd boy, has been so well preserved that one takes pleasure in reading an account of his life. Unlike many others in Bible history, his family is not wholly involved in obscurity. His father, Jesse, was the chief man of the village of Bethlehem and a direct descendant of Boaz, whom we became acquainted with in the story of Ruth and Naomi.

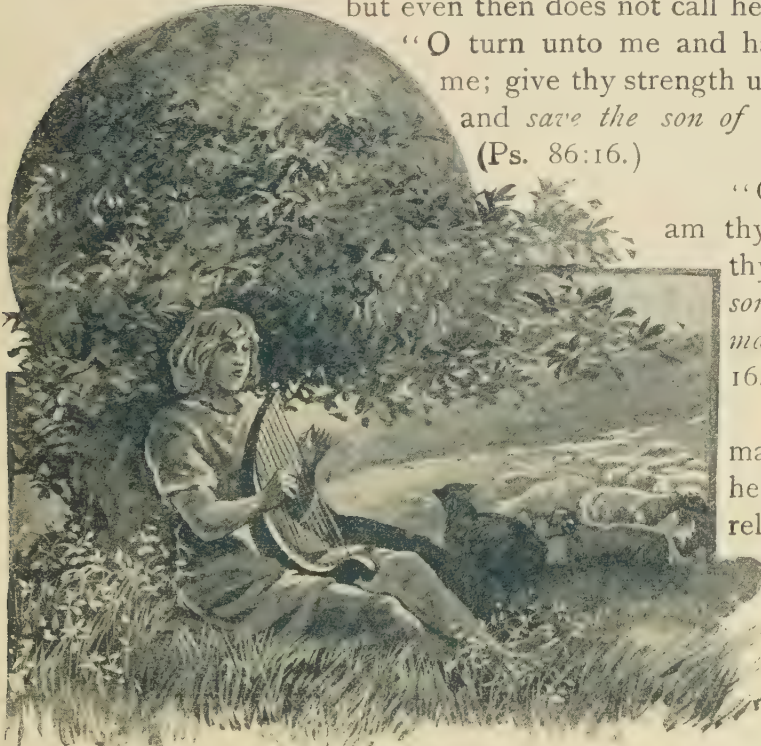
Bethlehem was David's birthplace, and because of this, the town has become historic in the life of Jesus: "Joseph went up to Bethlehem because he was of the house of David." And there Jesus was born.

Of David's mother we know but little. David speaks of her twice, but even then does not call her by name.

"O turn unto me and have mercy upon me; give thy strength unto thy servant, and *save the son of thy handmaid.*" (Ps. 86:16.)

"O Lord, truly I am thy servant: I am thy servant and *the son of thy handmaid.*" (Ps. 116:16.)

There is every mark of respect here. Next to his relation to God comes his close relation to his mother. She was connected in some way to



DAVID, THE SHEPHERD BOY.

Nahash, who, historians believe, was at one time King of Ammon. David seems to have come into the life of his parents at a welcome time, if we may judge by his name, which means "Darling." His brothers were much older than himself, and as a result he was never very intimate with them. With the sons of his sisters and brothers, though, he was closely associated.

David was a little fellow when the others were grown, hence he was scarcely ever considered by them when important affairs of the family were discussed. He interests the world, though, from his first appearance, and is introduced to us in Bethlehem at the yearly feast, when about eight years old. Jesse was the leading man of the place, and generally presided at the feast, and it was supposed that his family would all be present. Samuel knew that David was in the field keeping the flock, so he asked Jesse, "Are here all your children?" Perhaps he did this, as much as anything else, to see what he would say. Jesse replied, "There yet remaineth the youngest, and behold, he keepeth the sheep."

Samuel carried in his hand a long horn, in which was consecrated oil. He had brought it with him from Nob, where the oil was preserved in the tabernacle. The Elders who saw him were struck with fear, because they thought the Prophet's appearance indicated the carrying out of some serious matter. But Samuel reassured them by inviting them in to the feast of the heifer, which he had brought for sacrifice.

Always before beginning a feast the Prophet poured out some oil, which served as an invitation to begin the feast. On this occasion, however, when he stretched forth his hand to pour the oil, a divine voice controlled him. He could not continue the feast until his work was accomplished. He had been sent of God to choose a king to succeed Saul, and was told to go to the family of Jesse. When Samuel's mission was made known, one by one the sons of Jesse were requested to pass before the Prophet. The eldest son, by height and comeliness, seemed to be a fitting successor to Saul. But God said the Prophet was not to be enamored by outward appearance. When, one by one, all the sons had passed before the Prophet, and he saw none among them worthy the calling, he said to the father of the household, "Are these all thy sons?" Jesse replied that there was still one more—the youngest—who was keeping sheep.

Samuel then commanded them to bring the boy in from the sheepfold. He came, and standing before the Prophet appeared to be a youth with auburn hair, "fair of eyes," well made, and of immense strength. He seemed small in the presence of his almost giant brother, Eliab, but he had a strength in his arms which broke the "bow of steel," and he was swift as a wild gazelle.

David had been allotted that task which was usually given to the women and slaves, or to the youngest of the family—that of caring for the sheep. He carried a staff in his right hand, which he used both for his sheep and his dogs. In his left, he carried a sling, which became to him a rifle or artillery, as the case might be. A wallet was swung around his neck, in which he carried his luncheon or such things as he needed in his lonely life.

Samuel poured the sacred oil on David's head, then took his place at the feast. The suddenness and the surprise became so deeply imbedded in David's young life that it manifested itself in his poetry: "I took thee from the sheepcote." The solitary fields became to him a schoolroom—a divine sanctuary. As he watched his flock by night he saw in the beauty of God's sky lessons which he set to music, and with his harp played the accompaniment.

In those days the lion roamed the forest and the bear walked in the gullies and hills. David heard the roar of beasts but was able to defend his lambs. Because of his fearlessness it is said of him that he played with lions as though they were kids, and with bears as though they were lambs. About this time Saul felt uneasy, and could not rest. He lived in a fine palace, but this did not make him happy; he had many servants, but they could do him no good. Thinking to cheer him up, Saul's servants said: "Shall we look for a man who can play very sweetly on the harp? Perhaps if you were to listen to sweet music you might get well." Then Saul told them to look for such a man. One of the servants had heard of David, and he said: "I have seen one of the sons of Jesse, who lives at Bethlehem; he can play beautifully on the harp; is brave, speaks wisely, and is handsome. God, too, loves him; shall I send for him?"

Saul said that he would like this young man. Some of Saul's servants went to Jesse and said: "King Saul wishes to see your son David, who takes care of the sheep." In this way David was called up



to the court. Samuel had not told Saul who was to be king. David was so successful in bringing back a smile to the face and heart of the king that at times he was allowed to return home and remain weeks at a time. On one occasion after his return home he was sent to the frontier of Judah to carry food to his brothers, who were in the army



DAVID PLAYING BEFORE SAUL.

facing the Philistine force. No doubt David had shown his desire to attack the soldiers of the enemy on some previous occasions, for when he reached camp his brothers accused him of deserting the sheep to come up and take a hand in the battle.

At this time a ravine separated the two armies. While David was there, a giant, Goliath by name, clothed in armor, challenged and insulted Israel. His armor stirred fear in the hearts of Israel. The king in his tent felt ashamed that no one dared accept the challenge. Jonathan, even, was absent. He knew not what to do. The giant thought

that no one could kill him. Every day he used to call out with a loud voice: "Will one of the Israelites come out and fight with me? If he is able to kill me, then all the Philistines will obey the king of Israel; but if I kill him, then the Israelites must obey the Philistines. Is there any man that will fight with me?"

When David heard the war cry, he ran to the front, and although chided by his brothers, he told the guardsmen that Goliath ought not to insult the army, and that if no one else would go forward to meet him he would. The guardsmen, after listening to him, took him before the king. David had heard the giant challenge the host for the fortieth time. He had heard the king's proposition of reward. He had seen the dismay of his countrymen. He had gone from soldier to soldier with the impetuosity of youth and now he stood in the presence of the king.

The king for a moment had forgotten David, and he said: "You are not able to fight with that Philistine; you are very young and not used to fighting." Then David answered: "Once when I was keeping my father's sheep, a lion came and took a lamb out of the flock, and I went after him, and when the lion tried to kill me, I killed him. And once a bear came, and I killed him too. I shall kill this Philistine as I killed the lion and the bear, and He will deliver me from this Philistine."

When Saul heard these words he told him to go and fight the giant. David had no sword, or coat of iron, so Saul lent him his own armor and his own sword. But David had not been used to wear armor; so he said to Saul: "I cannot wear this armor," and he took it off again; neither would he take a sword or a spear. He went to the brook and chose five smooth stones, and putting them in a bag he went to meet the giant.

When the giant saw David he was surprised; he had expected to see a great man like himself, dressed in armor, and holding a spear in his hand.

But David was very young. His face was rosy like a child's, and he only wore a shepherd's dress and carried a staff in his hand.

David ran as one who had already conquered. He knew what God could do through him. He ran that he might gain momentum and then sent a stone full at the giant's forehead. It struck the visor

of his helmet, and Goliath instantly fell unconscious on the plain. David did not stop. On he ran, and bestriding the giant, severed his head with the sword which had fallen from the nerveless hand of the Philistine.

In that stroke the contest was ended. The Philistines accepted it as an omen and fled down the valley. This combat made David a national hero. The king's offer had been passed from mouth to mouth through the army: "And it shall be that the man who killeth him, the king will enrich with great riches and will give him his daughter and make his father's house free in Israel." This offer was open to the prince and the slave.

After the Philistines had been killed in battle, the Israelites went to their homes. Jonathan and David went with the king. As they were going along, they saw a great many women with harps, and they sang and danced. These are the words they sang: "Saul has slain his thousands, and David his ten thousands." David did not wish to be praised; he wished God to be praised. He would have liked to hear the women say that God had helped a poor shepherd to kill the giant.

After all was over Saul talked with David about various matters. During the conversation, Jonathan, who stood near, was charmed with the magnificent David. "And it came to pass when he had made an end of speaking unto Saul, that the soul of Jonathan was knit with the soul of David, and Jonathan loved him as his own soul.'" The two entered into a covenant of friendship. Then Jonathan took off his royal robe, giving it to David, as he did also his sword, bow and girdle. How strange David must have felt as he changed from the ordinary garments of the sheepcote to those of royalty! There was no jealousy in Jonathan. Nobly he said to David: "Thou shalt be king in Israel and I will be next to thee."

Before his return to the capital, Saul sent him on other expeditions and he deported himself as a born leader, winning new laurels from day to day, and when the hero was met with praise and song he incurred the enmity of the ruler. Saul was angry. He wished to be praised and could not bear to hear David praised more than himself. "Do they say that David is braver than I am?" Saul was envious.

Saul began to think that David was the man who was to be king instead of himself. He remembered that Samuel told him God had



chosen a better man to be king. Then Saul hated David, and wished to kill him. Saul had these wicked thoughts in his mind when he reached his own house. Instead of thanking God for his kindness in having saved his people, he became ungrateful. When he did not succeed in killing David, he feared him, and to remove him from his immediate presence he gave him important commands.

On one occasion, while David was at court, Saul spoke to him about marriage with his daughter Merab, but David modestly said he was not eminent enough to be "the son-in-law" of the king. Soon after this Saul bestowed Merab on some friend of the house across the Jordan. Michal, another daughter, in the meantime had learned to love David. This information pleased Saul, for he said: "This will prove a snare to David." What he meant by that word "snare" we shall presently see. He sent men to talk with David about marriage with Michal. The



"DAVID WENT TO THE BROOK AND  
CHOSE FIVE SMOOTH STONES."

young soldier said: "You speak of this as if it were a light thing for a man to be son-in-law to a king. I am a poor man. I have no dowry to bring with me." These words were reported to Saul, who replied that the only dowry he would require was a hundred Philistines taken in battle.

This was Saul's "snare." He hoped that David in winning his dowry would fall in battle. But to his surprise he won the dowry, and the king was compelled to give his daughter to him in marriage. The "snare" only added luster to the soldier's name. But with each rise of

fortune Saul conspired the more earnestly to take David's life, until one day Jonathan told David of the danger of his life and advised him to get away.

David, as a married man, was given the right to a separate establishment in army and court. Again and again his place was surrounded by a band of armed men, emissaries of Saul, who came in the night yelling like savage "dogs." David felt most keenly the ingratitude of the king. He felt the bitterness all the more because one of his own tribe and one whom he had aided was the leader in these attacks.

David's wife, Michal, conceived the plan of pretending to put "the household genius" in bed, and covered his head with a goat's hair net, so that when men tried to get in, she pointed to the figure, urging them to let the weary man rest. In the meantime he escaped by the window and over the walls. It was many years before he saw Michal again; then she had been given in marriage to a man named Phaltiel, of the village of Gallim. This deliverance is chronicled in his poems when he calls her his "divine protector." The Benjamite who knew so well how to use the bow was yet to be met by a mightier Bowman and by sharper arrows.

When David fled he went to the pastures of Ramah. Here he met the prophet Samuel. He had not seen him since the memorable feast on the occasion of his consecration as future king of Israel. What a difference there was now between the boy and the man! Then he knew nothing of strife. He was only a boy with a brave boy's love for the great and the true. He knew how to meet giants because he had met wild beasts. But he did not know how to meet intrigues and jealousy. He was still young, yet came to Ramah to enter a cloister. Here he laid aside his sword, and his archer's outfit, and became in truth a soldier of God. He used his harp in the school and his song in the sanctuary. It was better than the stones of his sling and the arrows of his bow.

And what quiet came down upon him! Here he remained until one day his refuge was betrayed to the king. Then Saul sent messengers to take David; and when they saw the company of the prophets prophesying, and Samuel standing as appointed over them, the spirit of God was upon the messengers of Saul and they also prophesied. "And when it was told Saul, he sent other messengers and they prophesied likewise. And Saul sent messengers again the third time and they

prophesied also. Then went Saul also to Ramah, and came to a great well that is in Sechu; and he asked and said: Where are Samuel and David? And one said, Behold they are at Naioth in Ramah. And he went hither to Naioth in Ramah; and the spirit of God was upon him also, and he went on, and prophesied, until he came to Naioth in Ramah. And he stripped off his clothes, and prophesied before Samuel in like manner, and lay down naked all that day and all that night. Wherefore they say, Is Saul also among the prophets?"

Even Saul's spirit was influenced by this holy place, and while he remained there his heart was full of the good and the pure. For a time Saul seemed quieted, but soon the madness of the king became even more settled. David was obliged to flee somewhere, so he hid himself in a cave.

He was not alone. His brothers came to him often; besides, a great many poor people liked to be with David. Kind people gave him food. Saul was angry when he heard that all were kind to David. He used to tell people that David was wicked, and David wished to kill him. Some people believed what Saul said, and thought that David was really wicked. David did not always live in the same cave, lest wicked people should tell Saul where he was hid. Sometimes he hid among the thick trees in the wood, and sometimes in one cave and sometimes in another. Saul was almost tired of looking for David, when something happened which you will like to hear.

One day David was in a very large cave with his men, when Saul and his men passed that way. Saul did not know David was in the cave, but he saw the cave and wished to go in to sleep for a little while. So he left his men outside and went in alone. David and his men saw him go in, but Saul did not see them, because they were in the dark parts of the cave. David and his men remained very quiet, and Saul lay down to rest. Then David's men said to him in a low voice, "Now you can kill Saul if you wish to." "No," said David, "I will not hurt the man whom God made king." And David would not let his men hurt Saul; but he went gently up to Saul as he lay asleep and cut off a piece of his clothes.

After a little while Saul rose up and went out of the cave; and he and his men went on looking for David among the hills. Then David came out of the cave, and called in a loud voice after Saul.



Then Saul looked behind him, and David bowed himself to the ground, and spoke very meekly to Saul, and said: "Why do you think that I wish to kill you? You came into the cave where I was, and some people advised me to kill you; but I would not do it." Then David held up the piece of Saul's clothes that he had cut off. "Look, my father," said David, "at this; I cut it off. I could have killed you, but



DAVID SPARES SAUL'S LIFE

I would not. Why then do you hunt after me? The Lord will keep me safe, and will not let you hurt me."

When David had done speaking, Saul said: "Is that your voice, my son David?" And Saul began to weep. He had once loved David, and when he saw how good David was, he felt that he had been wicked. "Yes," said Saul, "I see that you are much better than I am, and that you do not wish to kill me; and I know that you will be king one day." So Saul did not try to kill David that day, but went

home with his men to his own house. But David did not go and live with Saul, for he could not trust him. Once before, Saul had promised Jonathan that he would not try to kill David again, and yet he had broken his promise, and David knew that perhaps he would soon try to kill him again. So David went back to his cave.

Saul left off looking for David, but he soon began to hate him again. One day some wicked men came to him and said: "We can tell you where David has hid himself." Saul took a great many soldiers with him and went to the place where he heard David was. Saul directed his men to set up their tents on a hill, and to dig a deep ditch all round the tents, that nobody might come to the tents to hurt them. In the night Saul and his men would sleep in their tents, and in the daytime they would look for David. Then David went with some of his friends near the place where the tents were, and he said to his friends: "Who will go with me among the tents?" And one of David's friends said: "I will." Then David and his friend went in the night, and walked among the tents; but no one saw them or heard them. Even the people whom Saul had desired to watch, to prevent anybody coming, had fallen fast asleep. David went into the tent of Saul. He found him sleeping, and by his pillow he saw his spear stuck into the ground and a jug of water; and he saw other people who ought to have watched over him, asleep round about him.

Then David's friend said to him: "Let me take this spear and kill Saul; I will pierce his body through in a moment." "No," said David, "do not kill him; it would be very wicked to kill the man whom God has made king. Only take the jug of water, and the spear, and let us go." So they took the jug of water and the spear and went away from the tents. Then David went down the hill where Saul's tents were, and went up another hill; so there was a great way between Saul and him. Then David cried out with a very loud voice to men that were sleeping round King Saul, and said: "Why do you let people come near the king when he is asleep?" Then David showed the people the king's spear and the jug of water.

When Saul heard David's voice he remembered it, and wept. He said: "Is this thy voice, my son David?" And David said, "It is my voice, O king. Why do you look for me? What have I done? Have any wicked men told you that I wish to hurt you?" Then Saul said: "I

have sinned. Go to your home again. I will never hurt you again, because you did not kill me to-day when you might have done it. I have done very wickedly." Then David said, "Here is the king's spear. Send one of your servants to get it." David would not bring the spear to Saul himself. He could not trust Saul; he was not sure that Saul would not kill him. And then Saul went home, but David went into the part of Canaan where the Philistines lived, that Saul might not be able to hurt him. Here he came into contact with kings and armies. Their methods of ruling, raising armies, confederating cities, making treaties, keeping open lines of trade, all made their impression on him.

David was often at a place where death seemed imminent, but God, who permitted these things for the sake of education, did not allow them to reach to an extremity which had no salvation in it. At one time he was surrounded beyond hope of release, but the king was called away by the attack of alien foes and the siege was of necessity abandoned. God always saved him. He was at no time in complete despair. He needed the results of these things, even though he did not need the incidents, and God knew it.



## CHAPTER XXXIII

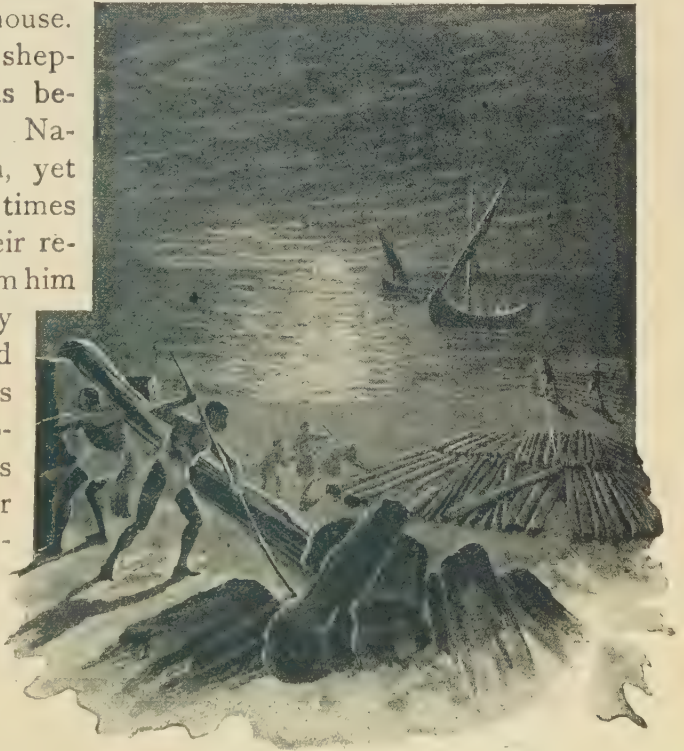
### DAVID; OR THE POET AND KING

IN the town of Maon, on the slope of Mount Carmel, lived a wealthy farmer and sheep owner by the name of Nabal. In olden times it was customary for farmers to send their sheep to the uplands under the care of attendants. When the folds returned for shearing, the farmers had great feasts and merry-making. These occasions were considered so grand to the simple folk that they said of them they were "like the feast of a king."

Nabal was considered a wealthy man. He had 3,000 sheep and 1,000 goats. The feast which he gave when the flocks returned was the event of the year. On one of these occasions ten young men were seen approaching his house.

As they came up, Nabal's shepherds recognized them as belonging to David's force. Nabal did not know them, yet they saluted him three times and then concluded their remarks by demanding from him

"whatever cometh to thy hand for thy servants and for thy son David." This was courtesy and insolence mixed. There was a defiant humor in their attempt to fasten a relationship between David and Nabal, who had never met. Nabal resented the demand. David's men replied that Nabal



CEDAR FROM THE MOUNTAINS OF LEBANON.

was an obstinate man and rightly named, as Nabal meant "fool." Nabal, however, knew his rights and was determined to maintain them. He said with much heat: "Who is David?" and "Why should I give my earnings to such vagabonds?" meaning the servants of David.

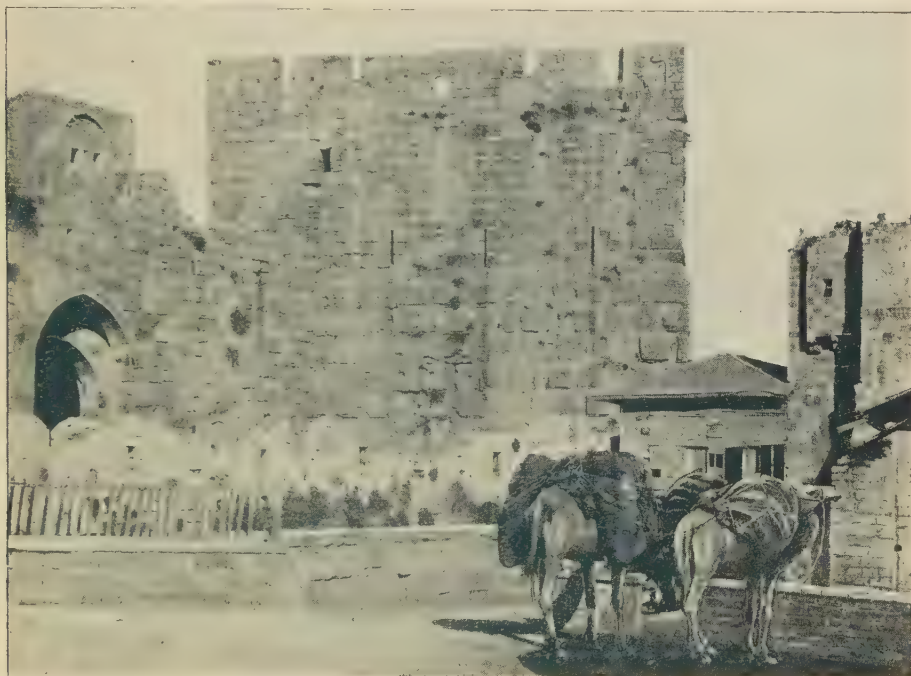
Immediately on the departure of the messengers, the attendants of Nabal hastened to Abigail, the wife of Nabal, and told her the whole story. They said they were indebted for many kindnesses to David's force. They knew David and felt sure that he would come in haste to avenge the words delivered to his men. Abigail, with all speed, got together a convoy of good things and went out in charge of it. She was not a moment too soon, for as she emerged from the wood she met David with four hundred men. Her tact, noble words, and high sentiments robbed David of his wrath and restored him to peace.

In the meantime, Nabal ate and drank and was merry. No one had told him that he had put them all in peril by his fierceness, or how Abigail had warded off the danger. In the morning when he recovered from the drunken stupor, Abigail told him all that had happened. It affected him so that he went into a fit of apoplexy and never recovered from it. The circumstances of his death sank deep into David's mind. In a dirge over one of his noblest enemies he rejoiced that he had not died like Nabal. As time passed on, the beautiful, noble and wealthy widow became the wife of David.

Since his victory over Goliath, the Philistines had looked on David in the light of a great conqueror. The dynasty of Saul, under Ishbosheth, made a stand at Mahanaim. It was a sacred spot, where Jacob long before had met the host of angels. But with the death of Ishbosheth, and of his great general Abner, David became the choice of all the tribes and was crowned king of Israel. He was south when Saul and Jonathan died, but was soon called to reign. He complied with Israel's wish, taking Hebron for his capital. He now became a great man. He gathered about him a circle of religious and military men, and together they extended the borders of Israel until they embraced all the territory from the Mediterranean on the west to the Euphrates on the east, and all the land from Meron on the north to Engedi on the south. This now made a great empire.

There occurred three incidents about this time which deeply colored David's life. The first was the capture of Jebus, afterwards

named Jerusalem. The Jebusites were so confident of its strength that they used words similar to those which had been said of the town of Salem, that even the lame, halt and blind, if posted on the walls, were capable of holding the city. David knew its fortifications, and offered as a prize the highest position in his power to give, to the man who would take the stronghold. A man, Joab by name, and a



THE TOWER OF DAVID, AT JERUSALEM.

nephew of David's, perceived a weak spot in the construction of the drawbridge, just outside the city wall. The city was so strongly defended by nature that it seemed impossible of attack. But like a "wild goat," Joab climbed to the spot he considered weak and was victorious in preventing the bridge from being drawn, and thus David's soldiers made a dash at the gates and overpowered the people.

David called the city after his own name—"The City of David." The first mention of it as Jerusalem is found in Joshua x. 1. The capture of this city gave a great impetus to the nation. It seemed that from this time on, the Lord of Hosts was with David and all his men. David made Jerusalem the capital and here built a palace for himself.



Through Joab, fortifications of even greater strength were added to it. The city of Tyre with King Hiram at its head at this time became an ally of David's and sent cedar from the mountains of Lebanon, for the building of the new sanctuary. In the zeal of the hour David decided to bring up the Ark, and placed it in Jerusalem on Mount Zion.

The thought of making Jerusalem a holy city did not dawn on David all at once. He spent many sleepless nights thinking out his plans, and finally called an assembly of the nation and together they went up to Kirjath-jearim, where the Ark was resting in the house of Abinadab. A new cart was made and on this the Ark was placed. Ahio, one of Abinadab's sons, went before, while Uziah, another son, guided the cart. They moved down the defile to the sound of music until they came to the threshing-floor of Araunah, close by Jerusalem. Here the oxen slipped on the great rocks and Uziah was killed. Tradition says a fierce storm was the cause of it. Whatever may have been the cause, David was so affected by the event that he left the Ark three months in the house of Obed-edom, a Philistine. David then made another attempt to carry it home. This time he did not go up with cart and oxen, but with priests and Levites, who carried it on their shoulders. Great preparations were made for its reception. The chief musicians of the nation were present and gladdened the occasion with their song. As the Ark moved forward, the people shouted and the choruses sang: "Let God arise, and let his enemies be scattered." The procession was one of magnificence. David the king was attired in a white linen gown of priestly order and carried a harp in his hand, the priests had gorgeous robes with ornaments of gold, while the schools, dressed in a sober attire, added to the stateliness as well as the solemnity of the scene.

The whole of the thirtieth psalm is ascribed to this event. David says of the dangers he had left behind, they were likened to a "grave" from which he had been snatched. Mourning had given way to joy and festivity. David placed the Ark in a new tabernacle on Mount Zion. His reign was now at its height. He was Hero, Priest, and Poet. He offered the sacrifice; he blessed the people and his household. About this time David wrote the psalms and sang them to his own harp. He also wrote them down and sent them to the singers, that they might sing them near the Ark. The psalms especially reveal the fact that

what was considered as a day of all wanderings was a thing of the past. Here "captivity" ended and "captivity was led captive." This feeling culminated as the procession moved up to the great fortress. The people cried with one august voice. Notice David's language in describing their entrance into Jerusalem. He speaks to those gates as though they were living beings. "Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be ye lifted up, ye everlasting doors, and the King of Glory shall come in."

Notice also his reply: "Who is this King of Glory?" The answer came swift, high, and like a sea's voice: "Jehovah, mighty in battle."



MOUNT ZION, JERUSALEM.

And again the host says: "Lift up your heads, O ye gates, and be ye lifted up, ye everlasting doors, and the King of Glory shall come in." Again they cry: "Who is this King of Glory?" The final answer is: "Jehovah Sabaoth, the Lord of Hosts, He is the King of Glory." Twice is the question asked regarding the character of the citizens who were to live in the new city. The answer is: "He that hath clean hands and a pure heart; who hath not lifted up his soul unto vanity, nor sworn to deceive his neighbor. He that walketh uprightly, and worketh righteousness, and speaketh the truth from his heart. He that backbiteth not with his tongue, nor doeth evil to his neighbor, nor taketh up a reproach against his neighbor. He that despiseth a vile person, but honoreth them that fear Jehovah. He that sweareth to his

own hurt, and changeth not. He that putteth not out his money unto usury, nor taketh reward against the innocent. He that doeth these things shall never fall." Ps. 15: 21.

Up to this time David, like Saul, had been more like a chief than a king. Now changes were apparent on every hand. People could come into his presence without previous announcement; men were called his servants. He set aside law where he deemed it necessary. He enlarged his army and introduced chariots of war. He formed his bodyguard of foreigners. The head command, however, remained in the hands of an Israelite of the purest blood. David had a special trained army of six hundred men, known as "the heroes," or "mighty men." This force was divided into bands of two hundred each and subdivided into small bands of twenty men each. The small bands were commanded by officers, and the larger were also commanded by other officers. Over all there was a commander, called the "captain of the mighty men." This force was the elite of the army, and every man was a tried hero. In addition to the officers of the army, there were those of state, which represented agriculture, finance, and law. The highest offices were those of the Prophets and High Priests. The two Prophets at this time were Gad and Nathan.

David was a good man; he loved God and tried to please Him. Yet there was still wickedness in his heart as well as goodness. I am going to tell you how he once displeased the Lord. His men had gone out to fight against some wicked people living near Canaan. David did not go to fight this time, but told Joab to take his soldiers to fight. David stayed at Jerusalem. One day when it was cool David walked on the top of his house, which was flat and level like a floor. As he was walking there he looked down and saw a woman whom he liked very much. David wished to have her for his wife; so he sent his servants to ask her name. They came back and told him that she was called Bathsheba, and that she was married to a man called Uriah.

David ought to have prayed to God to keep him from thinking about Bathsheba any more; but he kept on thinking and wishing that she could be his wife; and he thought, if Uriah was dead, then Bathsheba could be his wife. Now Uriah was a very brave and good man, and he had gone with Captain Joab to fight. David sent for Uriah, from the siege of battle where he had gone. He came as was



requested, but refused to go into his home, saying it was not honorable for him to sleep in a house while his comrades and the Ark of God tented on the field of battle.

Then David sent Uriah back to the army with his death warrant in his hands. He told Joab to put him in some attack which would mean death to him. This Joab did, and Uriah fell at the front in a brilliant but hopeless battle. The king publicly took his wife Bathsheba and supposed the incident was at an end. But God instructed Nathan, the prophet, to go into the presence of David and accuse him of his sin. Nathan went, but could not reach the king by direct accusation, so told him a story of two men. One, he said, was very rich—he had many flocks and herds. The other was poor—he had but one little lamb. One day a traveler came to visit the rich man. The rich man refrained from taking of his own abundance, but sent for the poor man's lamb, killed, dressed, and served it to his guest. Then said Nathan, "What shall be done to the rich man?" David's anger was greatly kindled against the rich man, and he said to Nathan, "As the Lord liveth, the man that hath done this thing shall surely die; and he shall restore the lamb fourfold, because he did this thing and because he had no pity." Then Nathan said to David, "*Thou art the man,*" and told him that a punishment would surely fall upon *him* for what *he* had done.



NATHAN REPROVES DAVID.

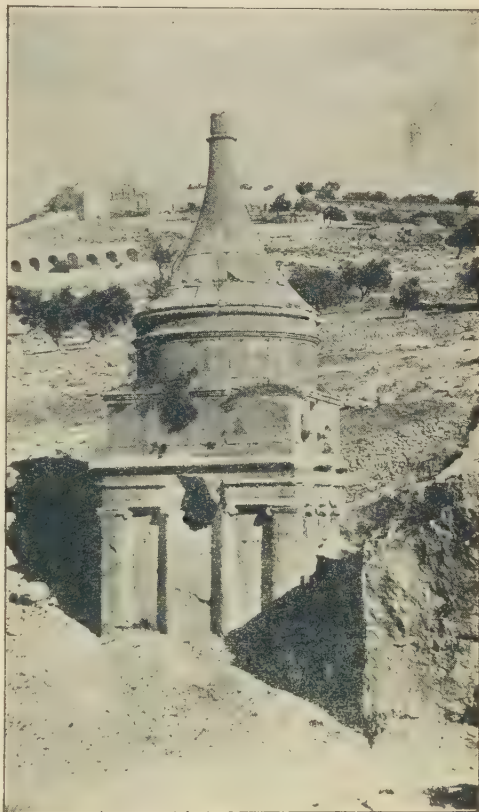
David was moved beyond words, and cried: "My sin is ever before me." We are glad to record that God forgave him, but it would be an error if we said he was not punished. His life and history as written for us in his psalms are the truest emblem ever given of a man's moral warfare and progress in this world. All earnest souls will discern in his struggles what we all have to contend with. God said he would punish David, though he had forgiven him. David had a great many children. I cannot tell you about all of them, but I will tell you of one called Absalom. He was a proud, handsome young man and was very vain of his beauty; he also told lies, and even killed one of his brothers who had offended him. When David heard that Absalom had killed his brother he was angry with him for a long time; but at last he let him come to his palace, kissed him and forgave him. Absalom wished to be king instead of David, and so behaved very kindly to all the people in Jerusalem that they might love him better than they loved his father, and make him king. When Absalom saw that many of the people loved him, he asked David's leave to go from Jerusalem into the country. Absalom had directed a great many men to wait till they heard the sound of a trumpet, and when they heard it to cry out: "Absalom is king."

David was in Jerusalem when a messenger came and told him that Absalom had made himself a king. Then David thought of his own sin, and felt that he deserved to be punished. He would not stay in Jerusalem, so he left his palace on Mount Zion, to go a great way off. There were many people in Jerusalem who loved David and went with him. When David came to the top of a hill, he prayed to God. At last David and his men came to a place where they rested, for they were very tired. Later they crossed over the river Jordan. There were three very rich men who lived near a wilderness. They had heard that David and his men were coming, so they brought David and his men a great many things—beds to rest their weary limbs, cups to drink out of, corn, vegetables and honey. Absalom soon heard where David was and came after him with a great army. When David saw that his wicked son meant to fight, he himself would not go out to battle, for he did not like to fight against Absalom; but he told his soldiers that they might fight, but not to hurt Absalom. Finally the forces of David under Joab met those of Absalom in a wood. The king's son not only

suffered defeat but lost his life. Absalom had a great quantity of beautiful hair. As he rode beneath the trees he was caught by the branches. His beast moved from under him and while suspended Joab drove a spear through his heart. This was done in spite of the king's definite orders to save Absalom alive.

The grief of David was such as to move the nation. He cried in bitterness of spirit: "O Absalom, my son, my son, would I had died for thee." David never forgave Joab for that crime; never forgot it.

The ordinary soldiers would not touch Absalom. But Joab and his immediate bodyguard of ten slew him. They threw the body into a ditch and covered it with stones. There, beyond the Jordan, the prince slept. Having no children, David designed and erected a monument to perpetuate his memory. He was buried beneath a heap of stones beyond the Jordan's waters. This is the pathos of the event. The people could not look upon his sorrow, but fled. In time, David returned to Jeru-



THE TOMB OF ABSALOM.

salem. The closing years of his life were marked with a still greater calamity. In the pride of dominion he ordered a census to be taken of the people. This was alien to the thought that he must trust in God. There was nothing startling in this, for a census had been taken before and was taken afterwards; but David's attitude regarding it was wrong. Joab refused to number Benjamin and Levi. It was left an unfinished work. The wrong of it, whatever it was, finally dawned fully on David's mind.

Gad, the prophet, came to him with a choice of three punishments,



either seven years of famine, or to be driven of enemies, or three days of pestilence. David was distressed exceedingly, but said: "Let me fall into the hands of God." The plague came. It was summer. The center of population was crowded with people who had just come up for the census. The capital always suffered during the summer heat. Just outside the walls of the city was a place belonging to a wealthy and influential Canaanite. Tradition says he was the old King of Jebus. His name is sometimes called Araunah, and at other times Ornan. His property contained a cave, beside which was a rocky threshing-floor. Above this spot was seen a vision of an angel who stood with drawn sword extended over the doomed city.

It occurred just as King David, with his retinue of soldiers in sackcloth and ashes, was passing. There Araunah and David met. Then David bowed before God, asking that the plague might fall on himself and his house. "These sheep, what have they done? Let thy hand be against *me* and against *my* father's house." In so doing he offered his life for his people. This spot ever afterwards was consecrated by Araunah and David to holy purposes. Here they erected an altar. The hill, in memory of the event, was called "Moriah: the Vision of Jehovah." The Temple Altar was afterwards erected on the spot and for over a thousand years was the center of the worship of the kingdom. David built the altar and *dreamed of a temple*, but because of his wars he was not permitted of God to *build* it.

One of David's sons, named Solomon, was good and God loved him very much. God told David that Solomon was to be king after him. At last David grew very old and weak, and he knew that he should die. So he wished to make Solomon king before he died. He told the High Priest to anoint him. Then David called his people together to a place in Jerusalem and spoke to all before he died. He stood up and said, "I once wished to build a house for the Ark of God: but God would not let me build a house, because I had fought so many battles, but said that my son should build it." Then David spoke to Solomon and said, "My son, serve God and He will bless you." Then David showed Solomon the things for building the house: gold, silver, iron, stones and wood.

A promise was given him that his dynasty would last forever to carry on the work. His remaining years were given to the preparation of



material for the house of God. He was to dream of it, but he was not to see it. He was to gather the material, but he was not to put it in place.

When David comes to his last hours, the dying monarch rises to his feet and charges his son to complete the temple which he had not been permitted to build. He binds his life to that of his son in the charge, and then he says to God: "Thine is the greatness and the power and the glory and the victory and the majesty. Both riches and honor come of Thee and Thou reignest over all. But who am I and what is my people that we should be able to offer so willingly after this sort? for all things come of Thee and of Thine own have we given Thee. For we are strangers before Thee, and sojourners, as were all our fathers; our days on earth are as a shadow, and there is none abiding."

Every passion of his life and heart is in his Psalms. There is imprecation, which we forget. There are other things which remain to fill the world with spirit, joy, glory and life. "David the son of Jesse: the sweet singer of Israel."



## CHAPTER XXXIV

### SOLOMON, KING OF ISRAEL

SOLOMON was the third king of Israel. Of his reign, we know much; of the personal details of his life we have but few. His life is one of the most majestic, and yet his history is one of the saddest in the world's story. Much mention is made in the Bible of him during his life, but after his death he is scarcely referred to. He was magnificent, but secular.

The Bible portrays the former, but not the latter.

He was a purely Asiatic monarch. He could never have occupied a European throne. Yet of all Asiatic sovereigns, he is the one best known to Europe.

As his reign is more secular than religious, it enables us to study him more freely than any other one of the great men of the Bible. Solomon stands between the common and the divine history of the world. His life is a link binding the two together. Were there many lives like his in the Bible, it would not be the



"DAVID CHARGED SOLOMON HIS SON."

book it is to-day. One like his was necessary; it combines the interest of God and man.

Of his early boyhood we know but little. After the death of Ammon and Absalom, sons of David, Solomon the child of Bathsheba

seems to have been selected as the heir to the throne. There was a son older than Solomon, by name of Adonijah, who was remarkable for beauty. David loved him to such an extent that when Adonijah played in the fields of Hebron, his father never said, "Why hast thou done so?" Adonijah once determined to forestall his father's death by seizing the throne. He assumed a royal state, cleared the streets with runners, and rode in a chariot with horses. He won over Joab, the commanding general. The sacred historian writes with evident sorrow of the old soldier.

There are here things we cannot see clearly. This comes more into view as we read Solomon's oath of office: "As the Lord liveth which hath *established* me and *set* me on the throne of David my father!" The word "establish" conveys much to us in view of what transpired.

All these events are very remarkable when we consider that we are writing about a boy who was not fifteen years of age. Some authorities place his years at the number twelve. His extreme youth and his own knowledge of it are drawn to our attention by his visit to the sanctuary at Gibeon. Here the chief priest Zadok ministered. Here the young king came accompanied by a vast concourse of people, to offer a sacrifice on the occasion of his accession to the throne. Here he desired to spend the night, for in spite of the fact that the Ark was on Mount Zion, the chief place of worship was still on the heights of Gibeon. Here on this place, and alone by night, God appeared to the young sovereign.

Three times in his history does this same thing occur—at his rise, his zenith, and his decline. Often and often men have wondered what really happened to him. He was on the threshold of life. We often forget that. Fiction is surpassed by fact. God said: "Ask what I shall give thee." The answer of the child was remarkable. He was burdened with a nation's responsibilities, and he said to the Lord: "I am but a little child; I know not how to go out or come in." Solomon was reminded of his father's youth when he ascended the throne. He thought, too, of the responsibilities which lay plainly within his sight. He thought of all the people; they could not be numbered nor counted for multitude.

No one before him had asked for that which he now was about to ask of God. "Give therefore thy servant an understanding heart to judge

thy people, that I may discern between good and bad; for who is able to judge this, thy so great a people?

“And the speech pleased the Lord, that Solomon had asked this thing. And God said unto him, Because thou hast asked this thing, and hast not asked for thyself long life; neither hast asked riches for thyself, nor hast asked the life of thine enemies; but hast asked for thyself understanding to discern judgment; behold, I have done according to thy words; lo, I have given thee a wise and understanding heart. And I have also given thee that which thou didst not ask, both riches and honor.

“And Solomon awoke, *and behold it was a dream.*”

He asked for what he needed most—wisdom. When he awakened and found it was a dream, was he disappointed? We do not know. If, though, it were only a dream, he must have found the dream working itself solidly out in his kingdom. In perplexity he had only to remember God and wisdom came to him. He left Gibeon and went to Jerusalem. I am now going to tell you of something that happened which showed that God did make Solomon as wise as He said He would. Solomon was the judge. One day there came two women to him who had quarreled with each other. One of these women held a dead babe in her arms and the other held a living babe. Both the babes were very small, only a few weeks old. The woman who held the dead babe seemed very unhappy, and said to the king: “This babe is not my own child. The other babe is mine. We two lived in the same house all alone. One night that woman lay upon her child in bed and killed it; and she got up and put her dead babe into my bed while I was asleep and took my living babe into hers. When I waked up in the morning I found only this dead child; then I saw it was not my own child.”

Then the second woman said: “You do not speak the truth; the living child is mine and the dead one is yours.” Then the first woman said again: “No, the living child is mine, and the dead one is yours.”

Now, the question was, which of these women spoke the truth, and which of them told an untruth? How could Solomon find out? How could he tell which ought to have the living babe?

Solomon spoke and said: “Bring me a sword.” When the servants brought the sword, Solomon said: “Cut the living child in two,





THE JUDGMENT OF SOLOMON.

and give half to one woman and half to the other; because both the women say the child is theirs. so let them each have half."

Then the woman who spoke first cried out: "Oh! do not cut the child in two, but let that woman have it; only do not kill it."

But the second woman said: "Let the child be cut in two, and let us each have half." Now which do you think was the mother of the living child? Solomon knew which was the mother, and he said to his servant, "Give the woman who spoke first the living child, and do not kill it; she is the mother of it."

Let us now turn to the empire as it developed under Solomon's hands. The territory now was not being extended so much as in David's time, but it was filling up and was undergoing the process of organization. The wars in the early portion of the reign are but the clouds of a past storm flying over a clearing sky. As his name indicates, his kingdom carved out by the sword under David was established by the arts of peace under Solomon. Solomon was a great builder. He built cities as well as wonderful buildings. The city of Baalbac commanded one of the great valleys toward the Euphrates. Here were built enormous foundations, attracting attention even now in their ruins. More wonderful still was Tadmor, located in the far east on the border of his dominions. The springs there gave abundant water. The city lay in a valley, between two ranges of hills, and made a fine halting place half-way between old Damascus and Babylon. At Tadmor, travelers would leave the mountains and pass into the desert. Travelers never forgot the beautiful palms of Tadmor, nor her springs; they cheered many a weary caravan. Tadmor and Baalbac are to-day only a skeleton, showing the greatness of by-gone days. In Solomon's day, the tinkling of the bells of the receding or approaching caravan was ever to be heard. The kingdom of Israel began to transact business with other nations—Tyre, Arabia and Egypt.

Documents in state show that the King of Egypt at this time was well disposed toward Solomon and gave him his daughter's hand in marriage. The marriage was an event of great importance. It brought the customs of Egypt to the Holy Land. Horses and chariots became common, and gradually many customs were changed. Solomon established a public inn four miles from Jerusalem—a grand starting point on the way to Egypt. Enormous stables for horses and camels were

built, with vast granaries for barley, oats and straw, also accommodations for relays of men. At the head of the eastern arm of the Red Sea, a fort was established, named Ezion-geber. In English we would call it "the giant's backbone." It took its name from the mountain range near by. The music of the shipbuilders rang out on the air, and ere long a busy emporium was established that carried on trade of a world-wide nature, thus becoming a cosmopolitan city where the people of all lands gathered. From this port the fleets of Solomon went forth to other lands.

Occasionally, Solomon himself came to Ezion-geber, no doubt to give a new impetus to the marine, and enthuse enterprise generally. Israel was, of course, only an apprentice at the business, but through Solomon's influence, Hiram, King of Tyre, sent sailors and helpers to the new and promising port. The Bible says: "And Hiram sent him, by the hand of his servants, ships and servants that had knowledge of the sea; and they went with the servants of Solomon to Ophir, and took thence four hundred and fifty talents of gold and brought them to King Solomon." Their arrival was a great day to the residents of Ezion-geber—as great, perhaps, as the arrival of Columbus in America. From Arabia there was a vast traffic in spices carried on by private merchants. The help which King Hiram and his brave Tyrian sailors brought to Israel reminds us of his tomb, which can be seen even now as you enter the harbor of Tyre on the Mediterranean. It is worn and beaten with the storms of many centuries, but the venerable pile tells a story of greatness which time cannot efface. By his aid and influence the fleets went and returned with cargoes as full of wonder to Israel as were those of the English, German and French to new America. It is likely that these fleets even then went as far west as Cornwall in England, and as far east as India. They brought back tin, sandal wood, spices, garments, gold, silver, peacocks and sometimes apes and other things. This extension of the kingdom had a marvellous effect on the nation. The poems in the Bible relating to these far-off merchants and their commerce were doubtless among the influences which moved the mind of Columbus toward undertaking his great voyages around the world. Think, if you can, of the vigorous influences all these things had upon the people of Jerusalem!



## CHAPTER XXXV

### SOLOMON; BUILDER AND SCHOLAR

SOLOMON'S reign is considered the golden age of the Jewish people. Jerusalem was, at the time of Solomon, in one respect a Messianic city. The poor were everywhere cared for. Poets delighted to speak of the justice of the reign, and writers generally clothed every

foot of land with plenty. "Judah and Israel were as many as the sand which is by the sea in multitude, eating and drinking and making merry. Judah and Israel dwelt safely, every man under his own vine and under his own fig tree, from Dan to Beersheba, all the days of Solomon."

The state grew wealthy, both as a result of the soil and commerce. Gold was so plentiful that silver was almost ignored. In the growing city Solomon built himself

at the same time he began the temple. The new palace was thirteen years in building, and consisted of several houses, each of which was built on foundations composed of enormous stones. One of them contained a long hall built of cedar. It became so famous as to be known as "The House of the Forest of Lebanon." In front of



SOLOMON IN ALL HIS GLORY

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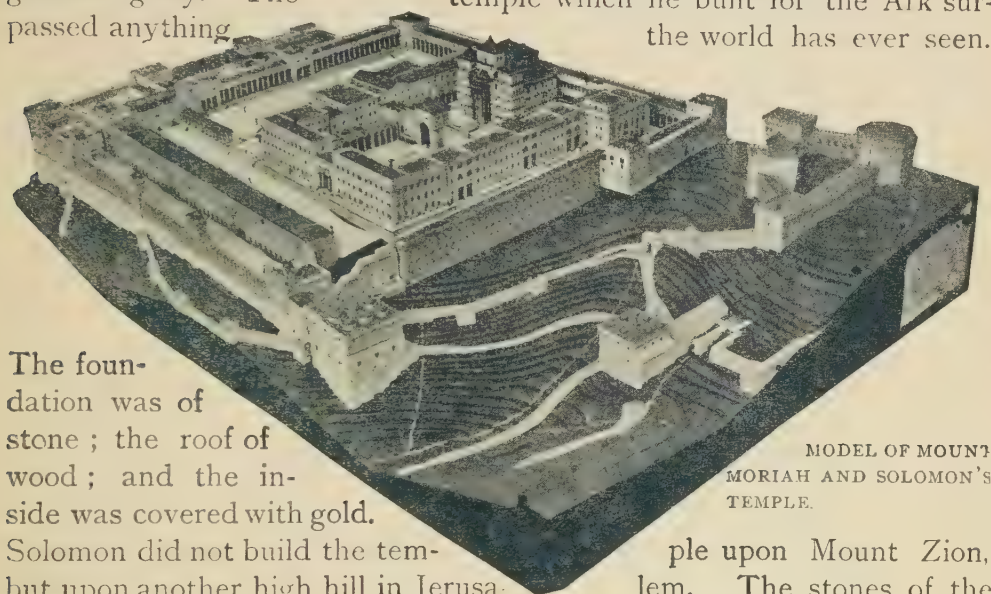
this hall was a portico, which together with a porch was called "David's Tower." On the outside of this tower a thousand golden shields were hung.

This rich and unique method of adornment made such a wonderful impression upon the mind of the people that it was called the "bride of Jerusalem," in honor of their women who wore their wealth, which was usually in gold coin, strung together and hung around the neck. The golden shields, glowing in the sunlight, suggested to the beholder the bride adorned with her dowry. Five hundred of these shields had been captured by David in his wars with Syria; the other five hundred were made by order of King Solomon. This tower was the center of the kingdom. There on a throne of ivory, Solomon, King of Israel, administered justice.

Solomon had also a beautiful paradise, or summer home, near Jerusalem. Early each morning, clothed in white, he entered his chariot, and, accompanied by a band of youth selected for beauty, drove to this summer paradise. He had also another summer home south of Bethlehem. This contained three great reservoirs, named "The Pools of Solomon." From these pools ran a covered aqueduct, carrying water to Jerusalem. He had still another beautiful garden, located to the north on the heights of Hermon. Here he could look down on the old Damascus river and view the vines on the slopes as the fruit grew golden in the sunlight. When the king went to this northern home, he carried his pavilions with him. These were so gorgeous in color that they made a strong contrast to the black tents of the Arabs.

Whenever his cavalcade started for the northern home, the waiters burned incense and Solomon rode in a cloud of smoke. Then it was that the people cried: "Who is this that cometh out of the wilderness like pillars of smoke, perfumed with myrrh and frankincense with all powders of the merchant?" Everything in his pavilion was on a magnificent scale. The pillars of his palanquin were made of silver, the bottom of gold, the covering of purple. He was an object of glory wherever he appeared—whether on his horse or in his chariot, at home or abroad. He held a scepter in his hand and wore a crown of gold on his head. His garments smelled of perfume. His path was joyous with song. When at home, he was constantly surrounded by all manner of musical instruments.

These things made a lasting impression on the people. Christ realized this when in one of his sermons several hundred years later, he spoke of the lilies and said: "Yet I say unto you that Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these." Solomon was always fond of rich things for himself, but he was ever ready to give God the greatest glory. The temple which he built for the Ark surpassed anything the world has ever seen.



The foundation was of stone; the roof of wood; and the inside was covered with gold.

Solomon did not build the temple upon Mount Zion, but upon another high hill in Jerusalem. The stones of the temple were hewn in the quarries. Each stone was laid in reverent silence, one on top of the others. The reason underlying this is found in Deuteronomy xxvii. 5: "And there shalt thou build an altar unto the Lord thy God, an altar of stones; thou shalt not lift up any iron tool upon them." "And the house, when it was in building, was built of stone made ready before it was brought thither; so that there was neither hammer nor ax nor any tool of iron heard in the house while it was in building." I Kings vi. 7. Thus grew a life in stone, a soul in marble.

When it was finished, Solomon sent for all the people to come to the temple. They came, and then the priest carried the Ark into a little room in the temple, called the Holy of Holies. Solomon built a door to the little room and placed a veil over the door. He made two very large cherubim, or angels, of wood covered with gold. These he stood upright, so that their wings stretched across the room. The



priests left the Ark under the wings of the cherubim. The other part of the temple was filled with priests, and with singers all clothed in white, and holding harps and other kinds of musical instruments in their hands. These were the words the singers sang: "Oh! give thanks unto the Lord; for He is good, for His mercy endureth forever."

As soon as the priests had left the Ark in the little room, and while the priests and singers were praising the Lord in the temple, the Lord Himself came down in a cloud, and filled the temple so that the priests and singers were obliged to go out of the temple and to stand in the court. Solomon had made a high place of brass; and stood upon it so that all the people could see him. Here he knelt, and spreading wide his arms, prayed to God. He asked God to hear all the people who were unhappy and who were sorry for their sins, and to forgive them.

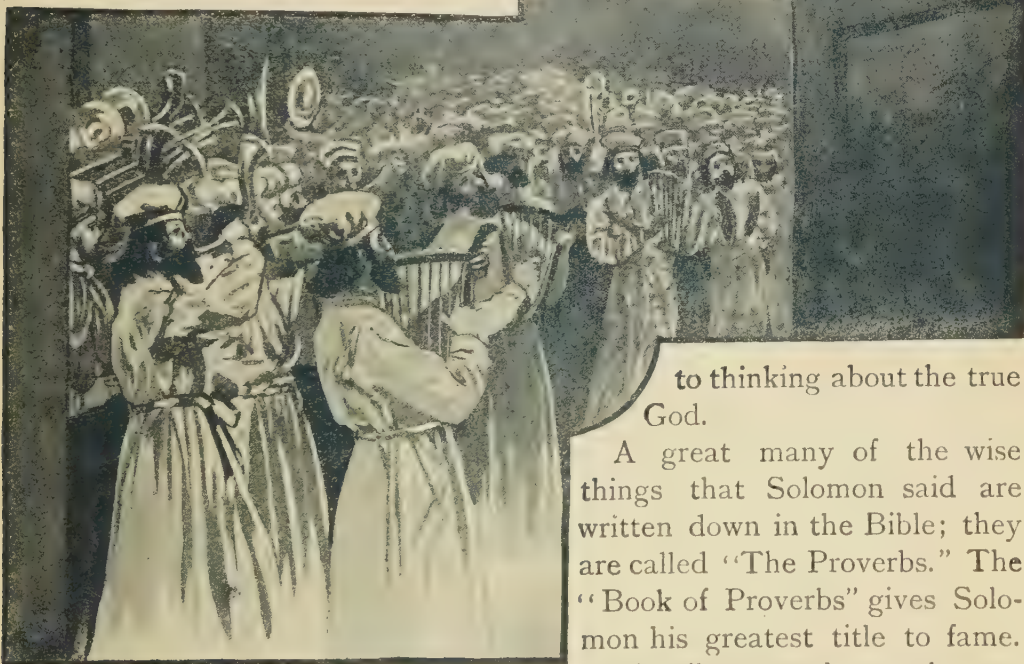
When Solomon had ended his prayer, there came down fire from heaven and burned up the beasts that had been killed and spread upon the altar. When the people saw the fire and the glory of God, they bowed themselves down to the ground and praised the Lord, and said: "He is good; His mercy endureth forever." Then they each went to their several homes, but they came here often to pray. But this was not all of Solomon's life. He accomplished as much for education on advanced lines as did Samuel in an earlier age.

You remember that God once spoke to Solomon in the night and told him to choose what he would have. He chose wisdom and God was pleased with his choice. When Solomon spoke, he said such wise things that people came from a great way off to hear him, and brought him presents. In time he grew very rich—in fact, the richest king in all the world. People came from far countries to hear his wise sayings, for he was a great scientist; he knew all about the plants from the highest tree down to the least plant that grows; he knew about the birds, beasts, worms, fishes, and insects; but he knew something much better than these things—he knew about God and how to please Him, and always gave people good advice.

Now there was a queen who lived a great way off, in the country of Sheba. She had heard how wise Solomon was, and she wished very much to hear him talk and to see the house he had built. She had also a great many questions to ask him. She had not been taught about

God in her own country, and she wanted to know a great deal about Him. She was very rich, so she brought a great many servants with her, and camels with spices and gold, as presents.

Solomon answered all the questions that she asked and showed her all the things he had built. The queen was quite surprised, and said to King Solomon: "How happy your servants must be to be able to hear the wise things you say! Blessed be the Lord your God who has made you king." When the Queen of Sheba went back to her own home, she carried something better than her presents; she carried a great deal of wisdom in her mind, which set her



PRIESTS AND SINGERS PRAISING THE LORD  
IN THE TEMPLE.

to thinking about the true God.

A great many of the wise things that Solomon said are written down in the Bible; they are called "The Proverbs." The "Book of Proverbs" gives Solomon his greatest title to fame. Ordinarily, proverbs are the sayings of all men in all nations.

But in this book of Solomon's we have the profound wisdom of *one* man. They were not written alone for his people, but for the world, and the world each day appropriates sufficient for its needs. He wrote three thousand, but all have not been handed down to us. His proverbs dealt with practical life. We obtain from them a solid and last-





THE QUEEN OF SHEBA AT THE COURT OF SOLOMON.



ing philosophy. Note his way of saying things: "Goodness is wisdom" and "Wickedness is folly."

Solomon was also a poet. His songs numbered "a thousand five," and all are dramatic, yet simple and rare. "The winter is past, the rain is over and gone; the flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of birds is come and the voice of the turtle is heard in the land; the fig tree putteth forth her green figs, and the vines with the tender grapes give a good smell. Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away." The name of God does not appear even once in the Song of Solomon. The author knew that the divine was not in the name, but in his work of works visible to the eye and healing to the soul.

God appeared to Solomon twice. The first time, God promised to make him wise; and the next time, He promised to bless him if he served Him. For a time he was very faithful, but his marriage with an Egyptian princess brought him in contact with foreign ideas, and gradually his religious nature was lowered. It is too bad that we cannot say he served God all his life, but I must tell you of the wicked things that Solomon did when he was old. He married a great many wives. This was wrong. People might then have had two wives, but God liked best that they should only have one. Solomon had seven hundred wives. He wished to be a very grand king. These wives worshiped idols. At last they persuaded Solomon to like their idols and to build altars for them on high places round Jerusalem. Solomon did even worse than this—he worshiped some of the idols himself. God said to Solomon: "Because you have done this, one of your servants shall make himself king; he shall take away a great deal of the land of Canaan from your son, as soon as you are dead." God had determined on dividing the kingdom because Solomon had forgotten to walk in the right way.

The Book of Ecclesiastes, written by Solomon, is a battle of the soul fought out in open view. When he wrote this book he had strayed away from God. Would he ever get back? He had lost the true wisdom. Would he ever find it again? In this book is his answer. There is nothing so sad in the Bible as this book. Here Solomon says: "Vanity of vanities, all is vanity." "I praised the dead that were already dead more than the living which are yet alive; yea, better than both they is he which hath not been. Man hath no pre-eminence

over the beast. All things come alike to all; there is one event to the righteous and to the wicked, to the clean and to the unclean. As is the good, so is the sinner."

But the book has a brighter ending, for he says: "Rejoice, O young man, in thy youth. Know that for all these things God will bring thee unto judgment. Remember thy creator in the days of thy youth." "Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was, and the *spirit shall return to God who gave it.*" "Let us hear the conclusion of the whole matter: Fear God and keep his commandments; for this is the whole duty of man. For God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good or whether it be evil."



THE TOMB OF DAVID, AT JERUSALEM.

## CHAPTER XXXVI

### JEZEBEL; OR THE FOE OF ELIJAH THE PROPHET

AT the death of Solomon, the kingdom of Israel was divided, just as God had told Solomon it would be, in two parts. Rehoboam, Solomon's son, was entitled to the throne, but soon one of his servants, Jeroboam by name, made himself king over the greater part of Canaan, leaving Rehoboam to rule over the rest. That part of "the kingdom of Israel" which Jeroboam had, consisted of "ten tribes," but Jerusalem was not in his territory. It was a good thing for Solomon's son that he had Jerusalem, because the temple was there.

God desired all the people in Canaan to go to Jerusalem very often to worship him. Jeroboam ought to have gone to Jerusalem to worship God; but he would not. He even told his people not to



SAMARIA OF TO-DAY.

go to Jerusalem. He did not wish them to go where there was another king, lest they should like the other king best. Then Jeroboam did a very wicked thing; he made two golden calves and set them up in his part of Canaan, one calf in one town and the other calf in another town. He said, "Do not go to Jerusalem, it is too far off; worship these golden calves."

One day God sent a prophet to tell him of his wickedness. Jeroboam was standing by an altar burning incense to a golden calf when the prophet came. The prophet said, "This is a sign that God is



angry; the altar shall be broken and the ashes that are on it shall fall to the ground." When King Jeroboam heard this he was angry and stretched out his hand, saying to his servants, "Lay hold on him." Now while Jeroboam's hand was stretched out, God made it grow dry and stiff, so that he could not pull it back; at the same time the altar was broken, and the ashes fell upon the ground as the prophet had said. But Jeroboam did not repent of worshiping idols and turn to God; he went on teaching his people to pray to the golden calves. And God was angry with Jeroboam.

The dynasty of Jeroboam passed away by insurrection and death, and after a series of troubled years, Omri, the captain of the host, was elected king. He was a great man. He perceived that a nation needed a metropolis around which and in which the nation might manifest its life. Six miles from Shechem, the valley opened into a wide basin. At this point a mountain, steep yet accessible, rose into view. It was oblong in shape, with level top. A beautiful view was presented from the summit. The valley was very fertile and abundant. Omri purchased this hill, paying for it the enormous sum of two talents of silver—over one hundred and eighty-seven pounds—a great sum in that day.

Here Omri built his city, naming it Samaria. In time, this city became the capital of the northern kingdom, as Jerusalem was of the southern. The city followed the slope of the hill. Around it was built a great wall, terraced at the top. The poorer houses were built of white brick, with rafters of sycamore; the finer houses were built of stone, with woodwork of cedar.

The hill of Samaria towered above all the surrounding summits. Samaria was a noble monument to Omri, who was succeeded by his son Ahab. Ahab became a courtier in his father's train. When he ascended the throne, he began to show the effects of aristocracy. He practiced polygamy, but his wives are all thrown into the shade by one woman, Jezebel by name, a daughter of King Ethbaal, a successor of King Hiram at Tyre. Her name in ancient history is what Lady Macbeth's is in modern literature. Ahab married Jezebel. That is a short sentence, yet it contains a long, sad story. Jezebel was a bold, reckless and brilliant woman. Ahab was not bad, but weak—so weak that he became a mere tool in the hands of Jezebel. Her spirit descended

through the dynasty. She raised a daughter, Athaliah, who in time married the King of Judah. The wild license of their lives ran like a poison in the blood of both prince and princess.

The people had been prepared for idolatry by the introduction of symbolic worship under Jeroboam. But the step which was taken under Jezebel was an awful plunge for the nation. The rites she introduced were not only cruel, but immoral and unclean. Two heathen sanctuaries were established, one at Jezreel, the other at Samaria. The one at Jezreel was dedicated to the female



THE TEMPLE OF BAAL.

goddess Ashtaroath, and was directly under the patronage of Jezebel. She brought here four hundred and fifty priests to serve at the altars. More remarkable still was the worship of "Baal" which she established on the Hill of Samaria. Heathen worship had struck root in Jerusalem even at the time of Solomon, but through the marriage of Jezebel's daughter the nation was to behold what it had never seen before. This is the first instance in the Bible of persecution on a large scale. It looked as if true religion was to perish from "the face of all the earth."

But if Jezebel was the fiercest and strongest of the heathen faith, one was raised up who was the sternest, greatest and strongest of all the prophets—a champion of the old truth. His name was Elijah. Elijah differed from all who had gone before him. He did not, in a sense, teach. He did not predict like other prophets—or at least, so

little that we may say he did not. He was fitted for God's service by his isolation. His dress was the simplest and rudest, his feet were bare, he often fasted.

Elijah, the Tishbite, appeared suddenly. We may say of him as of Melchizedek, that he was "without father, without mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days nor end of life." The scholars believed him to be some mighty man re-incarnated, or some angel who hovered on the confines of the world. His place of birth, even, is a matter of dispute. "There was no nation nor kingdom that Ahab had not sent to seek him, but behold they found him not." When they did see him, "the breath of the Lord carried him away whither they knew not." He first appeared at Gilead as a man of the mountains. He was like a spirit, with glowing, deep-set eyes, arrayed in long hair, and a mantle of sheepskin. The mantle he used to smite the waters with when performing a miracle, or to cover his head when praying.

The rough prophet and the polished queen were the opposing representatives in a great battle for a nation and even for a world. She sought him everywhere. She sent men beyond Palestine to seek for him. She never permitted the hunt to cease. If she found a place where it was even supposed that shelter had been given him, she poured out her wrath upon the people. The persecution was stopped only by God's intervention. A drought fell on the land, which lasted three years. It extended to Phœnicia. The rivulets dried up; the creeks became beds of stone; the grass perished; the leaves fell; the trees died.

The prophet, during this famine, lived in the underbrush close by the brook Cherith. There the ravens came night and morning and brought him bread and meat. But after a time the brook dried up, the leaves fell, and the ravens fled from the desolate place. Neither the prophet nor the birds had protection. Do you think God would let him starve? Listen! See what was said to Elijah. "And the word of the Lord came unto him, saying, Arise, get thee to Zarephath which belongeth to Zidon." And so it came to pass that Elijah crossed the land of Israel to the plains of the sea. Here on the coast the snows of Lebanon fed the streams. When Elijah reached the coast he found that Ethbaal, Jezebel's father, had ordered prayers to be offered in the temples, asking that the gods might send rain.



At Zarephath he saw a woman who had come through the village to gather sticks for a fire. She was about to prepare her last meal. While gathering the sticks, he said to her: "Fetch me, I pray thee, a little water in a vessel, that I may drink." God sent the greatest of prophets to the poorest of homes. Here was a gentle heart. This widow



THE RAVENS FEEDING ELIJAH.

was kind, and started for the water for Elijah. Then he called her again, and said: "Bring me, I pray thee, a morsel of bread in thy hand."

When he asked for bread, she said: "As the Lord thy God liveth, I have not a cake, but a handful of meal in a barrel and a little oil in a cruse; and behold I am gathering two sticks, that I may go in and dress it for me and my son, that we may eat it and die." And Elijah said unto her, "Fear not; go and do as thou hast said; but make me thereof a little cake first and bring it unto me, and after make for thee and for thy son. For thus saith the Lord God of Israel, The barrel of meal

shall not waste, neither shall the cruse of oil fail, until the day that the Lord sendeth rain upon the earth.

“And she went out and did according to the saying of Elijah, and she and he and her house did eat a full year. And the barrel of meal wasted not, neither did the cruse of oil fail, according to the word of the Lord which he spake unto Elijah.”

This lesson is one to which the world has often turned. The life of the prophet was saved by a worshiper of the heathen gods. He was learning that Jehovah “moves in a mysterious way, His wonders to perform.” Perhaps God desired to show Elijah that at heart all were the children of God and that he must separate the worship and the worshiper. He might hate the worship, he must love the worshiper. Elijah went to live with this poor widow, in a room upstairs. One day her son, who was a little boy, fell sick and died. The poor widow was unhappy. She thought that God was angry with her; and she wished that Elijah had not come to her house. So she went to Elijah and spoke angrily to him. Then Elijah said, “Give me thy son.” Elijah took the child in his arms and carried him to his own room and laid him on his bed. He then stretched himself upon the child as it lay dead, and prayed to God, saying: “O Lord, my God, I pray thee let this child’s soul come into him again.” And the Lord answered Elijah’s prayer. The child’s soul came into him again and he breathed. Elijah took the child in his arms and carried him downstairs and gave him to his mother, and said: “See, thy son is alive.” Then said the woman: “I see that you are a man of God, and all that you tell me about God is true.”

When the calamity of drought was at its height, Ahab went out to seek grass and water for his stock, and sent Obadiah his chief minister in another direction on the same errand. The prophet and the king had not met since Elijah had said unto Ahab, “As the Lord God of Israel liveth, before whom I stand, there shall not be dew nor rain these years but according to my word.” Elijah was sorry for the Israelites and prayed to God to send rain, that corn and grass might grow. God told Elijah that he would send rain, but first to go and show himself to King Ahab. Elijah did what God told him, for he knew that God would take care of him. So Elijah left the widow and her son, and set out on a long journey. Now while Elijah was on his way to King Ahab, he met

Obadiah. The latter was much moved by the meeting, and said: "Art thou my lord Elijah?" Then Elijah said: "Go and tell King Ahab that I am here." Obadiah was afraid, for he thought that while he was gone to tell Ahab, God would take away Elijah, and that Ahab would be angry and kill him. But Elijah promised that he would stay till Ahab came, so Obadiah went and found Ahab and told him that Elijah was waiting to see him. When Ahab saw Elijah, he spoke angrily, and said: "Are you the man that troubles the people of Israel?" Elijah said: "It is not I that trouble the people of Israel; it is *you* that have made these troubles come by your wickedness. You have not obeyed God; you have worshiped Baal."

The contest between Jezebel and Elijah was now at its crisis. Elijah proposed that a council of the nation be called, and that in the presence of that council, the priests of Jezebel and he should demonstrate whether Baal or God was all powerful. Elijah said: "Now therefore send, and gather to me all Israel unto Mount Carmel, and the prophets of Baal four hundred and fifty, *and the prophets of the grove four hundred, which eat at Jezebel's table.* So Ahab sent unto all the children of Is-



ELIJAH CARRYING THE CHILD DOWNSTAIRS.



rael and gathered the prophets together unto Mount Carmel." Elijah wanted them to see that his God was the true God; so he said to them, "Let Baal's prophets take a bullock and kill it, and lay it on the altar, and then let them ask Baal to send fire from heaven to burn up the bullock. I will take another bullock and kill it, and lay it on the altar, I will ask the Lord to send fire from heaven; and if Baal send fire, then you will know that he is the true God; but if my God send fire, then you will know that He is the true God."

The people liked what Elijah said, and they answered, "It is well spoken." Then Elijah told Baal's prophets to take their bullock first. So they took it and killed it, and put it on the altar with some wood; but they put no fire to the wood. Then they began to pray to their god to send fire. They cried, "O Baal, hear us." They went on calling out, "O Baal, hear us," till twelve o'clock; and they jumped about the altar as they used to do when they prayed to him. At last Elijah said to them, "Cry louder. Perhaps your god is talking, or perhaps he is hunting, or perhaps he is taking a journey, or perhaps he is asleep, and you must wake him." Still the prophets of Baal went on praying for fire; and at last they cut themselves with knives, and made blood flow, because they thought it would please Baal; they thought he was a cruel god that liked their blood. So they went on, till three o'clock in the afternoon; but no fire came from heaven. Then Elijah said it was time to ask his God to send fire; so he built an altar with twelve stones, and laid some wood on the altar and laid the bullock on the wood; and then he desired the people to throw twelve barrels of water over the altar.

That was the battle Elijah planned. That was the gage which Jezebel accepted. The False and the True were to meet in open contest; the place was Mount Carmel. The day of trial arrived. The contestants met, but the numbers seemed disproportionate. There were four hundred and fifty prophets of Baal in gorgeous vestments against the solitary figure of Elijah dressed in sheepskin. He saw the priests advance to the altar singing the songs of their gods. He saw their glory and their proud spears, but he trembled not; he knew God. He waited in rugged majesty and in prophetic silence for the hour to tell the story.

## CHAPTER XXXVII

### JEZEBEL; OR THE ABUSE OF POWER

IT may be of interest to pause a moment before entering into the heart of the contest between the God of Elijah and that of Baal. Mt. Carmel, where the people were now gathered, was historic ground. It not only overlooked the field where Deborah and Barak had conquered Sisera, but it overlooked also the slopes where Gideon had triumphed.

At this time the fortunes of Israel were again in the balance, and this time God's interests were vested in one man. It was early morning. The radiance of the sunlight still clung to the floating clouds. The dew on the flowers still flashed or turned crimson before the ascending sun. When Elijah addressed the people they knew that he took his text in part from the movement of the priests: "How long are you to halt and totter, first on one knee and then on the other? If Jehovah



THE SUMMIT OF MOUNT CARMEL, LOOKING OVER BAY OF ACRE TO THE MOUNTAINS OF LEBANON.

be your God, walk straight after Him. If Baal, walk straight after Him." The priests danced first on one foot and then on the other around the altars. Early morning had passed into full moon. It was a time for rest. The satire of Elijah grew keener and rougher. His human nature went farther and deeper into the contest. He urged the priests to "cry with a loud voice, louder and louder yet, for he is a god; for he has his head full and is too busy to hear your prayers; or perhaps he has his stomach full and has gone aside into retirement; or perchance in the heat of the day he is asleep and must be awakened." The priests became wilder and wilder. The spears and swords which were a part of their worship were tossed to and fro. They gashed each other and themselves. They were weak and covered with blood. The afternoon was passing into the evening, and the sacrifice they had placed on the altar remained untouched.

Imagine the wonder every one must have felt, when evening began to show itself on the land, and a faint breeze to stir the trees, to hear Elijah order the priests of Baal to stand aside. Up to this moment the human Elijah had been visible. But now a diviner man acts and speaks. The priests drew aside. Elijah called the people about him, where lay the unconstructed altar of his God. With his own hands he gathered twelve stones, placed them in order, and then laid upon the altar the sacrifice, which had been properly prepared. A trench was dug about it, and water from the well was poured upon the sacrifice and altar till the trench was full. It was the hour of evening sacrifice. The sun had sunk far westward into the sea. Elijah, in calm and majestic contrast to the heathen devotion, began his petition: "Jehovah, God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, hear me; Jehovah, hear me this day in fire, and let all this people know that Thou art Jehovah, the God of Israel, and I am Thy servant, and through Thee I have done all these things. Hear me, O Jehovah; hear me and let this people know that Thou, Jehovah, art the God and that Thou hast turned their hearts back again."

Then without ado the fire fell from heaven. First the ox on the top of the wood disappeared, then the forest wood, after that the stones of the altar, and finally the water of the trench was licked up by the tongues of flame. The people gazed on that scene with awe. For a moment "the God of Jacob had turned their heart back again." They



shouted by one impulse: "Jehovah, He is God!" The multitude lay prostrate on the earth. Elijah stood erect in their midst. The prophets of Baal in gorgeous but bloody robes stood apart. The contrast was greater in the evening's shade than in the morning's glory. The priests of Baal were seized by the multitude and led down to the stream, where Elijah superintended their execution. From this scene we may well withdraw our eyes. It is a pity that so noble a triumph should end in so terrible a way. After the turmoil of the day, the prophet had a sacrificial feast prepared.

To this the king was invited. While he was eating, Elijah was praying for rain.

He had already told the king that he heard the "foot-step." The boy attendant stood on the highest point, watching for a sign of rain far out at sea. The sun was gone, but the sky was full of light. Seven times the boy sentinel went up to look and bring back the



A CLOUD FLOATED INTO VIEW.

word, "there was nothing." The sky was cloudless. But suddenly, as one sees the sail of a little ship, a cloud floated into view. It was like a man's hand.

Elijah sent word to the king to hasten. Soon the heavens were overspread with dark clouds, the wind began to moan in the pines. There was need of haste to escape the fury of the coming storm. Soon the Kishon would fill with water. Fast over the plain the charioteer drove the king. Elijah, with God's strength upon him, kept tireless pace with the horses. Long before the king came to his palace the news of the day's disaster had been carried to Queen Jezebel. Elijah, she said, had slain the prophets, he had overawed the king, but there

was one undaunted heart—that was hers. She was his foe. Rising, she sent a message to Elijah, saying: “So let the gods do to me and more also, if I make not thy life as the life of one of them by to-morrow about this time.”

Elijah was alone with only a faithful boy as help. Tradition says it was the boy he had raised from the dead—the son of the widow with whom he lived in Zarephath, supposed to be Jonah. Taking the boy, he fled southward, going straight to Beersheba, the frontier gateway of the Holy Land. There he left the boy and entered a wilderness and desert. Under a desert bush he lay down to die. He lifted up a broken cry to God. “It is enough, O Jehovah, take away my life, for I am not better than my fathers.”

It is always strange, but true, that strong men, able to face a nation, can fall into a despondency so dark and deep that only angels can rescue them. Elijah’s weariness caused him to fall into a deep sleep. He was aroused from this by an angel touching him on the side. Startled, he arose, and found a cake which had been baked on some coals near by, and a “cruse of water.” He ate and lay down again. Again the angel came and bade him rise and eat, saying: “The journey will be beyond thy foot to go if thou dost not eat.” He ate and drank, and in the strength of it went forty days without food. The trip brought him to Horeb, the same place where Moses first talked with God.

While here, he lodged in a cave. The voice of God, evidently displeased, said: “What doest thou here, Elijah?” He told God everything. He who had bravely flung his life into the battle, weakly said: “They seek my life to take it away”—“they” referring to a woman. God said: “Go forth and stand upon the mount before the Lord.” While he stood waiting, down from the mountain a hurricane came. Great rocks rolled down as giant balls from the artillery of the storm. “But Jehovah was not in the wind.” Then the earth began to roll as the waters of a sea. Great gaps opened far down into the earth. “But Jehovah was not in the earthquake.” The earth ceased from trembling. Age seemed to have passed into the very marrow of the mountains. Then as Elijah looked out upon the gaunt peaks cleaving against the sky of night, he saw them burn and flame. “But Jehovah was not in the fire.”

In the height, where no sound of a stream, no voice of bird, no

cry of beast, no footfall of man broke the stillness, he heard a voice as still as the breath of a babe. He knew instantly that the supreme moment had come. Wrapping his face in his mantle, and standing in the entrance of the cave, "there came a voice unto him which said, What doest thou here, Elijah? And he said, I have been very jealous for the Lord God of hosts, because the children of Israel have



ELIJAH THROWING HIS CLOAK ON THE SHOULDERS OF ELISHA.

forsaken Thy covenant, thrown down Thine altars and slain Thy prophets with the sword; and I, even I only, am left; and they seek my life, to take it away."

Often great men, having put all their energy into a contest, feel much as Elijah felt then, that their lives have been a mistake and a failure. The nation to him appeared faithless. *He* alone seemed to be faithful. He felt that his work should have counted for more. God was now showing him that a work which is like a storm, or like an earthquake, or like a fire, does not accomplish His plan. Drought does not convert; slaughter of prophets does not soften a queen's heart; God's message was in the "still small voice." The great man must not faint because one method has failed. He must not be discouraged



because he is lonely. Elijah had misconceived God's plan. God had once shown him in the desert that his life was not at an end; it was only beginning. The very question, "*Why art thou here, Elijah?*" is a second reminder that the desert was not his post of duty. It implied that he had left his work behind. God had assigned him a task: "Go, return on thy way to the wilderness of Damascus." He must continue. He must remain true though others fail. He must continue, though his heart grow faint. He must be faithful, though others be faithless. That was *his* work; the rest he must leave to God.

He was sent north to anoint two kings—Hazeel and Jehu. One was a gentile, the other a Hebrew. God told Elijah to go and find a man called Elisha and anoint him prophet. Then Elijah left the cave and went to look for Elisha. At last he came to a field where a man was plowing. There were twenty-four oxen drawing the plow. They were harnessed two and two. A man was walking by the side of the last oxen. This man's name was Elisha. Elijah came up to the man, and taking off his own cloak threw it over the other's shoulders. He wished to show him that he was to come with him, and the man knew what Elijah meant. He left his oxen and ran after Elijah, and said, "I will come with thee, only let me first go and kiss my father and mother."

God's cause was greater than queen, sword, storm, earthquake, or fire. He was not in the state, nor the church, which existed by grace of Jezebel, but his cause was in the hearts of seven thousand persons who were then hiding "in dens and caves of the earth, and of whom the world was not worthy." God told Elijah of these; they "had not bowed the knee to Baal, neither had they kissed him." God's cause was in *their* hearts. The seven thousand were the seed which God was about to sow in the world. Elijah learned in the cave at Horeb to listen to "the still small voice" which spoke to him and which speaks to every being in the world. The prophet himself learned the greatest of all lessons: "Not by might nor by power, but by My spirit, saith the Lord."

We must leave Elijah and turn again to the main theme of our chapter. The dynasty in which Jezebel was the leading soul was about to be overthrown. This did not take place because of its idolatry entirely, but more directly because of a wrong done to a citizen of the

nation. The incident is as follows: Just beyond the palace walls, on the east slope of Jezreel, was a plot of ground, which Ahab desired in order to enlarge and improve his own palace gardens. Naboth, the owner, was a wealthy and influential man. He was much attached to the place, and, with natural independence, refused to part with the estate, saying to Ahab: "The Lord forbid that I should give to thee the inheritance of my fathers!" Religion and ancestral sentiment were



THE PLIANT NOBLES WITNESSING AGAINST NABOTH.

both mingled in his reply. This estate, no doubt, had been in possession of the family from the original partition of the land among the tribes. It was not to be parted with because the king desired it.

The refusal displeased Ahab. But while he was Israel's worst king, yet he hardly felt disposed to exercise a despot's will in this matter, and would, doubtless, have let the matter rest had Jezebel not interfered. Having no scruples herself, she thought her husband altogether too easily satisfied. So she went to Ahab and said: "Dost thou

not now govern the kingdom of Israel? Arise and eat bread and let thine heart be merry. I will give thee the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite." It is the woman who rules the feeble man. The queen then filled out the warrant in the king's name and passed word to the nobles to carry out the plot, sealing the document with the king's seal. She called an assembly of the nobles in Jezreel. Naboth, by reason of his rank, sat at their head. While in his seat of honor, a charge of blasphemy against God, and a charge of treason against the king, was preferred against Naboth by the pliant nobles. The required number of witnesses testified that Naboth was guilty of both charges and he was condemned to death without further examination. In this ruin his family and property were both involved. The family died with him; "the property became confiscate" to the state.

In the darkness of the night, Naboth and his sons were dragged forth and stoned. "Then they sent to Jezebel, saying: Naboth is stoned and is dead." She then went to Ahab, saying: "Naboth is not alive, but is dead." For a moment the king was overcome with remorse; but that lasted only a short time. He obeyed Jezebel, who said: "Arise, take possession of the vineyard of Naboth the Jezreelite, which he refused to give thee for money." Ahab went down in a royal procession to execute his wife's command. The vineyard was in sight. Now that he was about to make it his own, he was happy. The green terraces delighted his eyes. In the meantime, God had spoken to Elijah, telling him to meet the king in the field of Naboth. When Ahab arrived, he was surprised to find the gaunt, solitary, silent, motionless figure of Elijah before him. They had met before, and now in agony of a revulsion of feeling the king cried out in despair to Elijah: "Hast thou found me, O my enemy?"

The words which fell from the lips of "Elijah the Tishbite" were few, but they descended on the ears of the king and courtiers with a force which they never forgot. The prophet said: "I have found thee, because thou hast sold thyself to work evil." He then and there pronounced a doom upon the house of Ahab, the dynasty of Omri. The doom began to work itself out about three years afterward, and in the Syrian war Elijah and Ahab parted to meet no more. Ahab, allied with the king of Judah, wished to retake the fortress of Ramoth-Gilead. To ratify the alliance of Israel, Athaliah, the daughter of



Ahab and Jezebel, was given to Jehoram, the son of Jehoshaphat. A feast was prepared for the two kings, who sat on two thrones outside the gates of Samaria, in the open space occupied by the threshing-floor. Four hundred prophets of Baal, all of them Israelites, yet professing faith in Jehovah too, chanted a chorus urging the kings to reunite for the purpose of war. Only one dissenting voice was heard; it was that of Micaiah, the prophet. He kept in mind a vision which he saw, and said he beheld the tribes of Israel on the slopes of Gilead scattered like sheep having lost their shepherd. A voice spoke to the smitten sheep, telling them to return to their own homes, that their human leader was dead and their help was in God. We here see how God used agents for the carrying out of plans.

At this juncture, Zedekiah, another prophet,

controlled him. In a rude way, by action rather than by words, he prophesied the success of the two kings. He lifted up horns of iron to represent the thrusting of a bull. "Thus," he said, "shall Ahab push his enemies to the ends of the earth." Then he came forward, striking Micaiah on the face, at the same time challenging with his blow, so tradition says, that his arm might wither as that of King Jeroboam at the command of Iddo, if Ahab should fail. The kings hearkened to the false. They put Micaiah in prison and went forth to battle. Ahab disguised himself, but Jehoshaphat put on his royal robe. The disguise furnished no protection to Ahab, for early in the day "a certain man drew a bow at a venture and smote the king of Israel



THE DEATH OF AHAB.

spoke, but an evil spirit

between the joints of the harness." He suffered all day, but for the sake of the army would not leave his chariot nor have his armor removed. He faced the Syrians all day till evening. At that hour his spirit fled, but at his request the body sat in its blood-crusted armor till the battle was over. Though dead, the body enabled Israel to maintain ground.

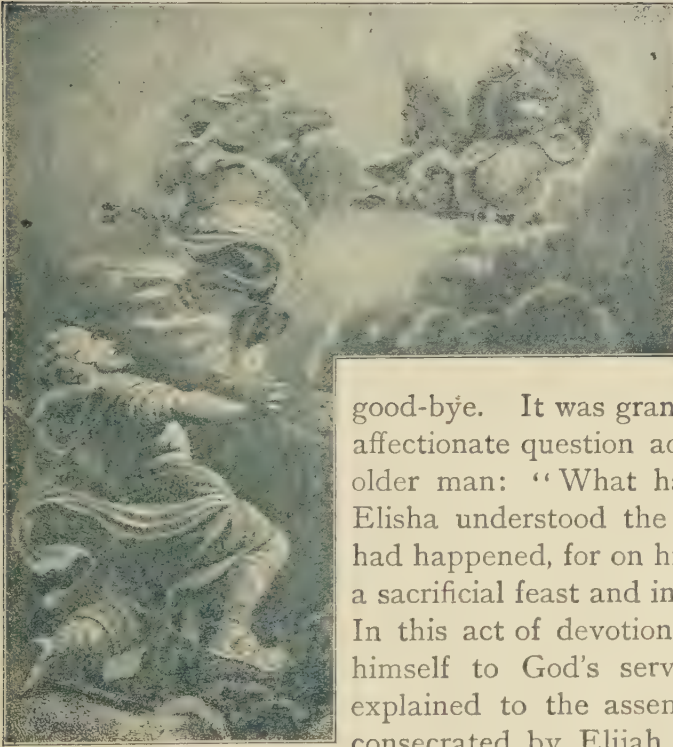
He died like a king. "And then went a proclamation throughout the host, about the going down of the sun, saying, Every man to his city, and every man to his own country." The sheep of Israel were scattered on the hills of Gilead. They carried Ahab's body to the royal burying place in the city of Samaria. Jezebel died some time after. Jehu, the Syrian king who made successful insurrection, came on to Jezreel. Jezebel attired herself in her best robes, painted her face and waited for the conqueror. She was a queen, a king's daughter, and not afraid. When the successful revolutionist rode into the gateway, she taunted him with stinging words. He commanded that she be thrown from the window to the street below. The attendants obeyed, and thus ended the life of Jezebel. The tragedy of the house of Omri took place as Elijah had predicted—Ahab and Jezebel paid for the blood they had shed.

## CHAPTER XXXVIII

### ELISHA; OR THE PASTOR OF A NATION

THE name of Elisha is first mentioned in the Bible when God named a successor to Elijah. He said to Elijah: "Go and find a man called Elisha, and anoint him prophet." Elijah then left Horeb and went until he came to a field where a man was plowing with twelve yoke of oxen. The prophet walked up to the man, and taking off

his own cloak threw it over the shoulders of the astonished young Elisha. Elijah walked on as if nothing had happened. Elisha understood that he was to follow Elijah, but asked permission to go first and bid his parents



ELIJAH BEING TAKEN UP.

good-bye. It was granted in the playful and affectionate question addressed to him by the older man: "What have I done to thee?" Elisha understood the full meaning of what had happened, for on his return home he made a sacrificial feast and invited in his neighbors. In this act of devotion he publicly dedicated himself to God's service. He undoubtedly explained to the assembly that he had been consecrated by Elijah and was now about to become his attendant. This was a symbolic

call to work, and done at God's command. Elisha did not seek the office. It is a question if he had ever thought of it. He had, however, the deep religious instinct necessary to such an office—a spirit of sacrifice and of obedience, and in that spirit went forth as a soldier. The ready



response was the result of a character long trained and developed. Elijah once wished to die. But God chose that he should never die, but go up to heaven without dying. When it was made known to him that he was soon going up to heaven, he went to a great many places where his friends lived, to say good-bye. His journey was to end in the forests of Damascus. Like a general who reviews the fields where his armies have marched, so did Elijah now look over the length and the breadth of the land where he had labored. Among other things, he went down to visit the schools which his personality had revived. In this pilgrimage Elisha accompanied him—not entirely, though, at Elijah's wish, for he did not quite like to carry the younger man through the journey of visitation. He was glad of his company but solicitous for his comfort. The journey, too, would of necessity be sad. Everybody knew that this round of visitation would close his career.

Elijah's tenderness for the younger man was displayed at each station. The aged sojourner says: "Tarry here, I pray thee; for the Lord hath sent me to Bethel—to Jericho—to Jordan." But in each instance Elisha replied: "As the Lord liveth and as thy soul liveth, I will not leave thee." At each of these places of study and sanctuary, the students said to Elisha: "Knowest thou that the Lord will take away thy master from thy head to-day?" To each he replied: "Yea, I know it, hold ye your peace." Elisha wished very much to see Elijah go up to heaven. Others might fear that end which was coming, but nothing should separate him from the one he loved. He would march the march out to the very end. "And they two went on." A rare spectacle greeted the eyes of some on-lookers as "they two went on." From the heights of Jericho a body of students saw the two prophets descend the long slopes from the city toward the river Jordan. The river was plunging and roaring, but the prophets did not stop. Elijah took off his robe, rolled it together like a rod, and smote the waters, and they *divided hither and thither*, and the two went over on dry ground.

After they crossed the river, Elijah felt a strange power take possession of him. He could hear angels sing, and felt that the time was at hand for him to leave Elisha, so he turned to him and said: "Ask what I shall do for thee before I be taken." Elisha thought of *one* gift—all else was as nothing beside. He said, "I pray thee, let a double

portion of thy spirit be upon me." This request is not to be interpreted as meaning that Elisha asked for a portion of God's spirit double in quantity to that enjoyed by Elijah—no, not that. His request was oriental in its nature. He spoke as though present at a feast where Elijah, the "father," presided. Elisha desired that in this feast of spiritual gifts he be given an elder son's portion. Remember the feast to which Joseph invited his brethren. During that feast he sent them "morsels" from his plate. That was a token

of honor  
and love.



"AND HE TOOK THE MANTLE OF ELIJAH  
AND SMOTE THE WATERS."

Elisha wished to be such a prophet as Elijah was, so he asked for a great deal of his spirit. Elijah said: "You have asked a hard thing, but if you see me when I am taken, it shall be so unto thee; but if

not, it shall not be so." In a moment, when he knew not, the end would come. Would he be equal to the ceaseless vigil? "And it came to pass as they still went on and talked, that behold, a chariot of fire and horses of fire, parted them both asunder; and Elijah went up by a whirlwind into heaven. And Elisha saw, and he cried: My father, my father, the chariot of Israel and the horsemen thereof. And he saw him no more." Elisha loved Elijah as if he had been his father; for he had taught him about God. As Elijah was taken away, his cloak fell from him, and Elisha picked it up.

Of Elijah it is said that "he rose up as a fire and his sword blazed as a torch." His life was always a mystery. We do not know where he was born, and we know not even his burial place. Like Moses, "no man knoweth his sepulchre unto this day." Elisha now had that mystery in his heart which possessed Elijah. He had also the prophet's mantle. When he returned alone from beyond the Jordan, he took the mantle, smote the waters, and said: "Where is the Lord God of Elijah?" The waters parted and Elisha went over. Men change suddenly by great events. When he returned to Jericho and the students came to meet him, they said to each other, "*The spirit of Elijah doth rest on Elisha.*" And they bowed themselves to the ground before him.

Elijah had so often disappeared and returned that the people felt he would surely do so again. They offered "fifty strong men" as a searching party to look for the prophet. They said perhaps he had need of something; perhaps "the spirit of the Lord has taken him up and cast him on some mountain or into some valley." Elisha said, "Do not send." But they urged him till "he was ashamed." Then he permitted them to go. After three days' search, the fifty returned, saying they could not find Elijah anywhere. Elisha in the beginning of his career did one thing which was entirely unlike himself. People who loved God loved Elisha, but wicked people hated him. There were some people who even laughed at him; there were some little children who even dared to mock him. I will tell you about them. Elisha was bald. One day as he came close to a town where a great many people lived who worshiped idols, some little children came out and mocked him, and said, "Go up, thou bald head." They told Elisha to go up to heaven as Elijah had done, that they might not see him any more. Elisha turned and said that God would send them a dreadful punishment. The children soon found that Elisha had spoken the truth; for two bears came out of the wood and tore forty-two of them into pieces. This seems like a hard thing for so kind a man to do, yet Elisha was human like all the rest of us.

You shall now hear of a kindness to a poor woman who had lost her husband. The husband had been a good prophet, but poor, and had not been able to pay for all the things he had bought. The woman came to Elisha and said, "My husband is dead, and I cannot pay my debts. A man is come to take away my two sons to be slaves."



Elisha said, "What hast thou in the house?" The woman said, "I have nothing but one pot of oil." Elisha said, "Go and borrow a great many empty cups, jugs, and basins, and bring them into thy house, and shut the door upon thee and thy sons, and pour the oil into all these cups and basins, and put them by." She poured and poured, and still there was oil left in her pot. At last she said to her son, "Bring me another cup." But he said, "There is no more." So she told Elisha that every cup was full, and he said, "Go and sell your oil and pay your debt, and when the debt is paid, keep all the money that is over to buy bread for yourself and your children."

Elisha's home life was very unlike Elijah's. He did not dwell in the mountains, but in his own "house" in the royal city. When not there, he was among the cloisters of the college, in the homes of the professors, or in the quadrangle of the universities. Elijah's long sheep-skin mantle was laid aside. He carried in his hand a staff, like

all citizens of rank. Elijah's life was one of struggles; Elisha's was one of peace. Elijah battled with kings; Elisha was their friend and counselor — everywhere kings addressed him reverently as "My Father." On one occasion when a king consulted him regarding the treatment of prisoners, Elisha said that he must not kill them, but feed, clothe and send them home. One king he healed, another he placed on the throne. He was a great and good man, but we are sorry to record that he did not protest against the idolatry of the people. Neither was he as strong in prophetic power as Elijah. His life was too much bound up in the every-day life of the people. It was quite as much



THE FOUNTAIN OF ELISHA.

material as spiritual. He predicted *plenty*, not *famine*. Character is more than man's acts; it is more than a man's success. Success does not gauge a man—at least, it does not do so necessarily. A man may succeed in God's sight when he seems to fail before men. Elijah was a giant; Elisha was not. There has been only one Elijah; there have been multitudes of Elishas. Elisha had long years of peace and success. Elijah had no success at all—at least, not worldly—and no peace at all. Elisha's soul was ever kind, but never exacting. One day when he was at Mount Carmel, the hostess where he was stopping met him, saying her boy was dead. Elisha threw his whole soul into the restoration of the child and would not rest until he gave him back alive to his mother. In Jericho, as elsewhere, he was always a welcome guest. He dwelt, when on Mount Carmel, in some holy building where people could easily find him. A "bed" was ready for him in almost every home. A place at the "table" and a "seat" were ever at his disposal. He often went to Shunem. On his way he passed the house of a great woman. She said unto her husband: "Behold now, I perceive that this is an holy man of God, which passeth by us continually. Let us make a little chamber, I pray thee, on the wall; and let us set for him there a bed and a table and a stool and a candlestick; and it shall be when he cometh to us that he shall turn in thither." On one occasion, during his stay in Dothan, when he was surrounded by chariots, horses, and armies of a hostile king, his servant became greatly alarmed. Elisha said: "Fear not, for they that be with us are more than they that be with them." Elisha prayed and said, "Lord, I pray thee open his eyes that he may see. And the Lord opened the eyes of the young man; and he saw, and behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha."

Because he was an ordinary man, although a great man, he was obliged to suffer the sufferings of the dying. A splendid funeral was tendered him, and later on, in the royal **city** of Samaria, a tomb was erected by the nation to his memory. Such was his hold on the nation's faith that miracles were credited to his very bones. Elijah is the man we love to think of in a crisis. But Elisha is the man who is with us every day of our life. He is the lesser, but the necessary man. We can say of him as Jesus said of John the Baptist, "No man born of woman is greater, yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he."

## CHAPTER XXXIX

### A LITTLE HEBREW MAIDEN; OR THE HEROINE OF FAITH

“HOW Man of Old by God Was Led” would not be complete without the story of the Hebrew maiden who was taken captive and carried up into Syria. The Kingdom of Syria was, in the days of David and Solomon, a part of the Kingdom of Israel. But now Syria had revolted and secured her independence. Thus David’s kingdom became three kingdoms—that of Israel, Judah and Syria. The Kingdom of Israel at the time of Solomon was very rich; but weakened by secession, the two lower portions, Israel and Judah, began to excite the cupidity of other nations. Their riches were a tempting prize. Syria, on the other hand, instead of becoming weaker, became more powerful. Damascus was

her capital. She acquired such strength that eventually she demanded a portion of the royal city of Samaria as a residence for the Syrians. The Syrians had already taken Ramoth-Gilead, a town which the Israelites had tried again and again to get back. It was during one of these wars that the Syrians carried off some captives, and among them a little Hebrew girl, who became a maid to the wife of Naaman—a general in the Syrian army. Naaman was the idol of the army and nation, and an intimate friend of the King of Syria, but unfortunately he was afflicted with that



“THE KING WAS BROKEN IN SPIRIT.”



most terrible of all diseases, the leprosy. It is often difficult to see how events, though seemingly unimportant, fit into one another. The kindness and the little things of life are often the foundations for great blessing. Although a captive the little girl's life had been made pleasant in the great home. She learned to love the officer's wife, and her sympathy for the sick Naaman set her to thinking. She knew there was *one* man who could, by God's help, cure Naaman, but would Naaman consent? Finally one day she said to the wife of Naaman: "I wish my lord were with the prophet in Samaria. He would recover him of his leprosy." This message was told to Naaman, but the good man had grown hopeless. "No one had been cured of the leprosy and no one could be," he said. With them the matter rested, but some person overhearing the conversation went to the king with the information the maiden had given. The king was much impressed. He knew of Elisha—knew him to be a great man as well as a great prophet, and he said, "Perhaps it is true what the girl says."

During the first siege of Samaria by the Syrians, Elisha was the soul of the defense. He had animated his king and people throughout the entire scene. The Syrian army, occupying the hills which surrounded the city, could look down into the streets of the hunger-smitten place, and they knew that some one strengthened the people, for they repeatedly said to one another, "They cannot hold out much longer." The Samaritan councils were held in the house of Elisha, who informed the King of Israel of every secret movement of the Syrians. The Syrian king soon learned that every move he was about to make was revealed to Elisha, and that Elisha informed his king. One day the king learned that his people, driven by hunger, had eaten human flesh. He was broken in spirit and walked in the presence of the people in sackcloth and ashes. He was so enraged at Elisha, who was strengthening the nobles to resist Syria, that he sent a man to kill him. Elisha said, "Take note, there will be plenty of food in Samaria to-morrow at this time." So the king walked back to the palace amid the cries of the starving people. He said he would wait till "to-morrow about this time." The Syrians were many and Israel but a "flock of kids" in comparison. "And there were four leprous men at the entering in of the gate; and they said one to another, Why sit we here until we die? If we say we will enter into the city, then

the famine is in the city and we shall die there; and if we sit still here, we die also. Now therefore come and let us fall unto the host of the Syrians; if they save us alive, we shall live; and if they kill us, we shall but die.

“And they rose up in the twilight to go unto the camp of the Syrians, and when they were come to the uttermost part of the camp of Syria, behold, there was no man there. For the Lord had made the hosts of Syria to hear a noise of chariots and a noise of horses, even



THE LEPERS PLUNDERING THE CAMP OF THE SYRIANS.

the noise of a great host; and they said one to another: Lo, the King of Israel hath hired against us the kings of the Hittites and the king of the Egyptians to come upon us. Wherefore they arose and fled in the twilight and left their tents and their horses and fled for their life.” The lepers saw at a glance what had happened. They ate and drank. They gathered garments and silver and gold and buried them. Twice over did they do this. Then they said: “This is not well. Let us go and tell the king, for this is a day of good tidings.” So they came back to the city and called to the porter at the gate, who opened a small door, and asked what was wanted. They said: “We have been to the camp of the Syrians. They have fled. The horses are tied

there; the tents are standing; the garments are in the tents; food is everywhere, and all the plunder of silver and gold is in the camp." The tidings were carried to the king, who replied: "I know these Syrians. They perceive that we are hungry. They would entice us by food. Now whilst we are absent in their tents obtaining provision, they will enter our city and take it from us."

Some one then suggested that messengers on some of the few remaining horses be sent to see whether it were true or not. So the king was persuaded, and sent forth men, who returned with the news that the enemy had surely fled. Elisha henceforth was not only the idol of the nation, but his fame went abroad; so when his name was mentioned to the king of Syria as one who could save Naaman, the king immediately felt that the thing could be accomplished. He prepared for the healing as one who believed, but *not as one who understood*. He treated matters as if healing was by the power of man and not the power of God. He prepared Naaman in magnificent style. Sent him with ten talents of silver, three thousand pieces of gold, with garments and other presents. He sent a characteristic letter which ended as follows: "I have sent Naaman my servant to thee, *that thou mayest recover him of his leprosy.*"

The people of Samaria knew that this had come about by the maiden's prayer. She had sent the hero of the nation to be healed. When Naaman's splendid embassy pulled up before the palace of the King of Israel, and he had read the letter sent him by the King of Syria, he said: "Am I God to kill and make alive that this man doth send unto me to recover a man of his leprosy? *See how he seeketh a quarrel against me.*" But Elisha said: "Let him come now to me and he shall know that there is a prophet in Israel." But good and great as Naaman was, he needed a lesson, and Elisha administered it to him. He did not even go out to see him, but sent a message by his servant to Naaman telling him to wash seven times in the Jordan, saying his flesh would come again and he would be clean. Naaman was wroth. In his mind he had arranged a most spectacular program. He had pictured the prophet as coming humbly to his chariot, and calling upon the name of God asking that he might be healed. The Jordan was a turbulent and muddy stream. There were other streams up north which were clear and cool, as a result of the mountains and the snows.



Naaman said: "I needed not to come from my native rivers to wash. I could have washed in Abana and Pharpar, the lovely streams of Syria." The sick man felt that his long, pitiful and brilliant journey had ended in a comedy. But he was after all a noble man. His servants loved him, and they said: "If the prophet had told thee to do some great thing, thou wouldst have done it. Why not now?" Thus it came about. "He went down and dipped himself seven times in Jordan, and his flesh came again *like unto the flesh of a little child, and he was clean.*"

After this, Naaman was a changed man. He came back to the home of the prophet and professed his faith in the one true God.



LEPERS' QUARTERS AT DAMASCUS.

He then offered to give him some presents, but Elisha refused, saying he did not heal for money nor gifts of any kind. When Naaman could not prevail upon Elisha to take the presents, he asked that he might have "two mule loads of earth" on which to build an altar when he returned to Damascus. He had determined never to worship idols again, but said he must go with his king to support *him* while he worshiped the god Rimmon. Naaman then asked Elisha's forgiveness and forbearance in this matter. The prophet might have said: "Do not compromise yourself that way," but he didn't. He merely said: "Go in peace." He could assist his king, though he did not believe in his king's god. The temple of Rimmon would have what it never had before—the prayers of a pure heart ascending to Jehovah. When all was over Naaman set out in his chariot to go back to his own country. Gehazi, Elisha's serv-

ant, heard his master say he would not take anything from Naaman, and he wished very much that he could get some of the beautiful things himself, so he thought of a way of getting them. He ran after Naaman, and determined to undo what he deemed a great mistake. When Naaman saw Gehazi running after his company, he descended from his chariot, saying: "Is all well?" Gehazi said: "All is well, but there are two visitors at our house, very good men, who are very poor, and my master would like some silver, and two suits of clothes, to give to them."

Naaman pressed two talents of silver and two changes of raiment upon Gehazi. Two servants returned to bear the burden of silver. Gehazi hid the things in a secret place, then returned to the presence of Elisha, who asked him where he had been; he replied: "Nowhere." Then the prophet told Gehazi how his heart had gone out after him and how his spiritual eyes had seen him. "Let the leprosy, therefore, of Naaman cleave unto thee and unto thy seed forever. And he went out from his presence a leper as white as snow." There was great joy in old Damascus when Naaman returned. "This is the conquering conquest which conquers the world, even our faith." Jesus said: "And many lepers were in Israel in the time of Elisha the prophet; and none of them were cleansed save Naaman the Syrian." This incident in this young girl's life has moved the hearts of generations of people. There was no battle in it, but a better thing—the peace of God. By a loving remembrance of God she has become one of the heroines of history.

## CHAPTER XL

### JONAH; OR THE PROPHET SENT TO THE HEATHEN

JONAH was a man of wonders. From childhood up he had known the meaning of hunger and want. It was his mother's meal and oil which was increased by Elijah. This was the only romance of his life.

He knew what it was to look down in the barrel and see all the meal disappear day by day with no way of replenishing it. He knew, too, what it was to look again and again and see it the same in quantity, though his mother, the prophet Elijah, and himself had fed from it day after day. That kind of a life made him feel that God was not far away, and we do not wonder that he became a prophet. We should rather wonder had he not become one, for when only a boy he went off with Elijah on his tours, sometimes remaining weeks at a time. His life with Elijah was never an easy one. There was much walking to do, and only such comforts were given them as the woods and mountains could furnish. Once they journeyed from Samaria to Beersheba, stopping neither night nor day for rest. He was with Elijah at Mount Car-



WAKENING JONAH.



mel, and had seen the wonders he performed there. He was the one to watch the cloud rise out of the sea, and brought the news to Elijah. He had been pretty much everywhere. Prophets and kings were alike familiar to him.

The Book of Jonah, which relates some incidents of his life, is of unknown date and unknown authorship. The story which is told in the book is interpreted in three different ways.

First: It is said by some to be a true history of events in the prophet's life.

Second: By others it is said to be a Divine *story*, inspired by God, to teach of His mercy.

Third: Another claims that it is a *vision* to Jonah; that he was inclined to run away from duty and that this vision was presented to him as a lesson.

These different views are held by men equally pious, who believe equally in the power of the Lord. Each person who reads the book must take his own view. Any one view is right so long as that view honors God. With this explanation let us proceed to the study of this remarkable, interesting and beautiful story.

Jonah, when grown to manhood, became the court prophet to Jeroboam II., the most brilliant king since the time of David and Solomon. Jeroboam II. extended the borders of Israel to the old glorious frontiers and made Samaria's palaces richer and more splendid than any in the world. Jonah was one of the intensest of patriots. The *invasions of his country by the heathen had made him feel like a warrior rather than a pastor*, therefore when he was told to go and warn the city whose king had made Israel shed tears, he bolted, and ran away from God and duty, going directly to the wharves on the Mediterranean Sea. Had he any definite point in mind? Evidently not. The only thing which seems to have been in his mind was to get as far away from duty as he could and to do so as quickly as possible. He discovered that a ship was about to sail to Tarshish, a port in Spain. Tarshish was about the ends of the earth in that day. He boarded the ship, paid his fare, and fell asleep. While he was still asleep the sailors hauled up the anchor and spread sail.

Everything had prospered up to this point. There had not been a single hitch in the plan, and it looked as if one man had nearly escaped

God. But long ago these words were written: "Whither shall I go from thy spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there; if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there." The scene of calm changed. A storm appeared, which rose higher and higher. The wind blew and the waves beat the ship like great hammers. To save their lives, the sailors began to throw the cargo overboard. Not only this, but each sailor began to call on his god for help. All were in deep distress except Jonah. Scripture says: "But Jonah was gone down into the sides of the ship; and he lay and was fast asleep." The captain finally went to the sleeping man and asked him to call upon *his* God and if possible save *them*. In the meantime, they decided to cast lots to see what man aboard had sinned, for they felt this storm was God's wrath meted out to some one.

In Proverbs 16:33 we have the following words: "In a lot-vase the lots are shaken in all directions, nevertheless from the Lord is the judgment or decision." In this instance it was likely that all the stones were white except one; that probably was black. Jonah drew the black stone. They knew from the fateful color that he was the one against whom the storm raged. They felt that the gods pursued them. See their



JONAH CAST INTO THE SEA.

questions: "For whose cause is this evil come upon us?" "What is thine occupation?" "Whence comest thou?" "What is thy country?" "Of what people art thou?" With great solemnity he answered their questions. "And he said unto them, I am an Hebrew and I fear Jehovah, the God of heaven, who hath made the sea and the dry land." At this point he told them the whole story from the beginning to the end. There is nothing more touching in literature. Here was a ship tossed by the waves and at the point of shipwreck. The wind was more than a gale; it was a tempest. His story made them afraid, and they said in their trouble: "Why did you do this? What shall we do unto thee?" He said: "I know that for my sake has all this come upon you. If you throw me overboard, the sea will be calm."

But the men were determined not to do this. In olden times the ships had big oars. The sailors began to pull for the land. They "dugged" their oars into the sea, but they gained no headway. The storm became worse every moment. They gave up and prayed to God, saying: "We beseech thee, O Lord, we beseech thee, let us not perish for this man's life, and lay not upon us *innocent blood*; for thou, O Lord, hast done as it pleased thee." With that prayer they took Jonah and cast him into the sea. Almost immediately the sea became calm. The vows they had made while in danger were paid not to their gods, but to Jehovah. The ship sailed on into the far west. Jonah all this time was passing through an experience which has caught the world's attention, whether it be viewed as history, religious parable, or vision.

"Now the Lord had prepared a great fish to swallow up Jonah. And Jonah was in the belly of the fish three days and three nights." He prayed in the pit of horrors unto God. "And the Lord spake unto the fish, and it vomited out Jonah upon the dry land." God began with Jonah exactly where the relationship had broken off. "And the word of the Lord came unto Jonah the *second time*, saying: Arise, go unto Nineveh, that great city, and preach unto it the preaching that I bid thee. So Jonah arose and went unto Nineveh, according to the word of the Lord." His visit was opportune. It was a great city. It was, in fact, a series of cities in the midst of great parks. It was by all odds, at that time, the most singularly beautiful of all cities of the



world. Immense sums of money, exacted from conquered nations, had been spent to beautify it, but some disorder and some weakness had fallen upon the empire. No people needed to repent more than the opulent, luxuriant and indulgent people of this capital. Had the prophet come when all was prosperous, they would have met him with laughter. But

his voice came as an emphasis to their calamities. His manners were similar to Elijah's. His hair hung down his back; his

outer garment was a rude sheepskin mantle. As he entered the city, he uttered a high cry which startled the ear. He said: "Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall perish?" The people rushed from inn, house and bazaar to hear him pronounce their doom. No one knew him or from whence he came. he was a "holy

The effect attendants bore

The king arose, lifted the crown from his head, and immediately dismissed the court. Repairing to his palace, he put on sackcloth and ashes. He commanded that every citizen should do the same—nay, he commanded even the cattle in the field to be clothed in the symbols of mourning. He issued the proclamation that every citizen should "cry mightily to God and turn from their evil way and from violence that was in their hands." God's mercy stopped not with



JONAH ENTERING  
NINEVEH.

They knew, though, man."

was startling. Pale the news to the king.

Israel, it even extended to the heathen. He beheld the tears of the people, from the king in his palace to the mother in the hovel, and forgave them all their sins. One would think that a minister with power to do so great a work would have rejoiced. But how was it now with Jonah? Scripture says, "It displeased Jonah exceedingly." He was very angry and refused to preach, because God did not punish them.

Two things mark the time in which he lived. The first is the voyage on the Mediterranean as far as Spain; the second and most important is the fact that Jonah was the *first prophet that preached to the Gentiles*. There is a further revelation: Jonah would deny mercy where God gave it. Jonah said: "I pray Thee, was not this my saying when I was yet in my country? Therefore take, I beseech Thee, my life from me; for it is better for me to die than to live." Elijah had once said a similar thing. He had to learn a lesson. Now it was Jonah's turn. He sat under his bower "till he might see what would become of the city." He hoped for the worst, but "God repented of the evil that he had said he would do unto them, and *He did it not*." Every man's consistency must perish before the repentance of those who have been foredoomed. Labor is nothing in comparison with repentance. The story ends with Jonah "faint and wishing to die." That the book was written, shows that he lived, and lived the more nobly. The book is a Divine protest against preconceived opinions of men. It is the Bible's revelation of humanity and of God's universal love toward all. He who reads the book of Jonah can better understand the mystery of the universe.

## CHAPTER XLI

### ISAIAH; OR THE TEACHER OF UNIVERSAL SALVATION

UP to Isaiah's time, the kings of Judah had been mightier than their prophets. But Isaiah was greater than any sovereign of his time. Judah had, up to this time, measured her years by her great kings. From this time on everything was computed from the time of Isaiah. Since he was a statesman as well as a prophet, he was the center of all political activity. He was conspicuous both as court preacher and

orator. We know but little of his early history, except that he was of royal blood and supposed to be a cousin of Uzziah, the king. In the first verse of the Book of Isaiah, written by himself, he gives his father's name as Amoz. His mother was a prophetess. Isaiah's teachings became so well established that after his death a group of his disciples carried on his work. One of these, under Isaiah's name, has exercised a wider influence on the world than the prophet himself. This disciple is supposed by some to have written the last twenty-six chapters of the Book of Isaiah. With the exception of the Psalms, no book in the Old Testament has had so wholesome an influence on the world as this, and certainly none has borne greater fruit. Independent as a thinker, Isaiah did not hesitate to use the material furnished by the



ISAIAH.



older prophets and teachers. We can say of him, that he became a new shoot out of an old root.

His simplicity and clearness of expression contrast strongly with the involved thought and inflated ideas of his age. This drew upon him the satire and invective of the scholar. The simplicity, which made it possible for children to read his writings, caused his critics to say: "Whom shall he teach knowledge? and whom shall he make to understand doctrine? Them that are weaned from the milk and drawn from the breasts." The scholars pretended that his knowledge fed only the youngest children of the nation. He was accustomed to repeat truth for the sake of impressing the mind of the reader. But the subject never lost majesty. He claimed that a nation was best taught by "precept upon precept, precept upon precept, line upon line, line upon line, here a little, there a little." Oftentimes the plainness of his word not only offended the church but the world. His call as prophet came in the fifty-second and last year of Uzziah's reign. It occurred on an occasion when he was standing in the court of the temple, and gazing toward the Holy of Holies. All of a sudden he noticed that every obstacle was removed. The great cedar gates had opened wide and the many-colored curtains had been drawn aside. Far within he saw a throne, and on this was seated "The Lord of Hosts." Music ascended and the gates of the Temple rocked as if touched by the shock of an earthquake. The house grew dark. Then it was that his own sins and the sins of his nation passed before him. In the consciousness of them he cried: "Woe is me, for I am lost."

Immediately a flaming seraph took a coal of fire from the altar, and placing it on his lips cleansed them, and a voice came out of the Holy Place, saying: "Whom shall I send; who will go for us?" A splendor of devotion seized Isaiah, and crying out, he said: "*Here am I, send me.*" He was told of the hopelessness of his mission, but as one bent on doing a duty he took a bold stand. Amid all the cruelty and darkness of his times he knew there was a remnant of the nation which was sound and pure. This he would save. He looked beyond the desolation of the present to a time when "the wilderness and the solitary place would be glad and the desert rejoice and blossom as the rose." For sixty years he held this hope steadfast, and as his

country's history grew darker, his hope grew greater and his vision grew wider. *He was the first prophet to show that the ultimate well-being of the race did not rest in the Jew but in the Gentile nations.* Paul says Isaiah was "very bold." Indeed, he was the first to make the plan of God so broad as to comprehend all nations. With this thought



THE RUINS OF AN OLD CHURCH AT SHILOH.

there grew in his mind the revelation of "a son of David"—a son that could restore the royal house and gather all nations under His scepter. He gradually outlined the features of a Ruler so delicately as to make him Divine.

Isaiah not only had a difficult but a dangerous task. His "boldness" drew upon him the ridicule and contempt of his day, and he finally paid the heart-breaking penalty which every man has to pay *who lives before his time.* True, the ages have vindicated him, but oh, how he suffered! In the midst of his sorrow he said: "When the eyes of them that see shall not be dim, when the ears of them that hear shall hearken, when the vile person shall no more be called liberal, nor the churl said to be beautiful, when the liberal shall devise liberal

things and by liberal things shall he stand, when Ephraim shall not envy Judah, and Judah shall not vex Ephraim, when thine eye shall behold the king in his beauty and see the land that is very far off," he meant to carry us over the stormy sea to a peace which every aspiring soul must have in order to satisfy it.

As time passed on he was arraigned for heresy. The king, Manasseh, was his accuser. The Talmud gives us some of the charges:

Moses had said: "No man shall see God's face and live."

Isaiah said: "I saw the Lord."

Moses: "The Lord is near."

Isaiah: "Seek the Lord till ye find him."

Moses: "The number of thy days I will perfect."

Isaiah: "I will add to thy days fifteen years."

He was silent before these accusations because he perceived the hopelessness of showing that Moses and he did not differ. As one after him, the greatest man at the bar of judgment, remained silent, so did Isaiah. We use the same words in both instances: "As a sheep before her shearers is dumb, so he opened not his mouth." The book of Isaiah is both his memorial and monument. His theme, "Divine Salvation," is still the greatest theme in the world.



## CHAPTER XLII

### HEZEKIAH; OR THE KING WHO PRESENTED A LETTER TO GOD

MATTERS were going from bad to worse until, finally, near the end of the reign of Ahaz the holy lamps went out and the temple doors were closed. The interior was given up to neglect and decay. This poverty, weakness, and idolatry invited attack from both Israel and Syria. The port on the Red Sea was taken and the allies conspired to place a usurper on the throne at Jerusalem. They said, "Let us go

up against Judah and vex it and make a breach therein for us and set a king in the midst of it, even the son of Israel."

The news caused so great an agitation in the royal circle that Ahaz and the nobles hastened to make proper defense. They were just in the midst of their inspection of the walls and the



MICAH BEFORE HEZEKIAH.

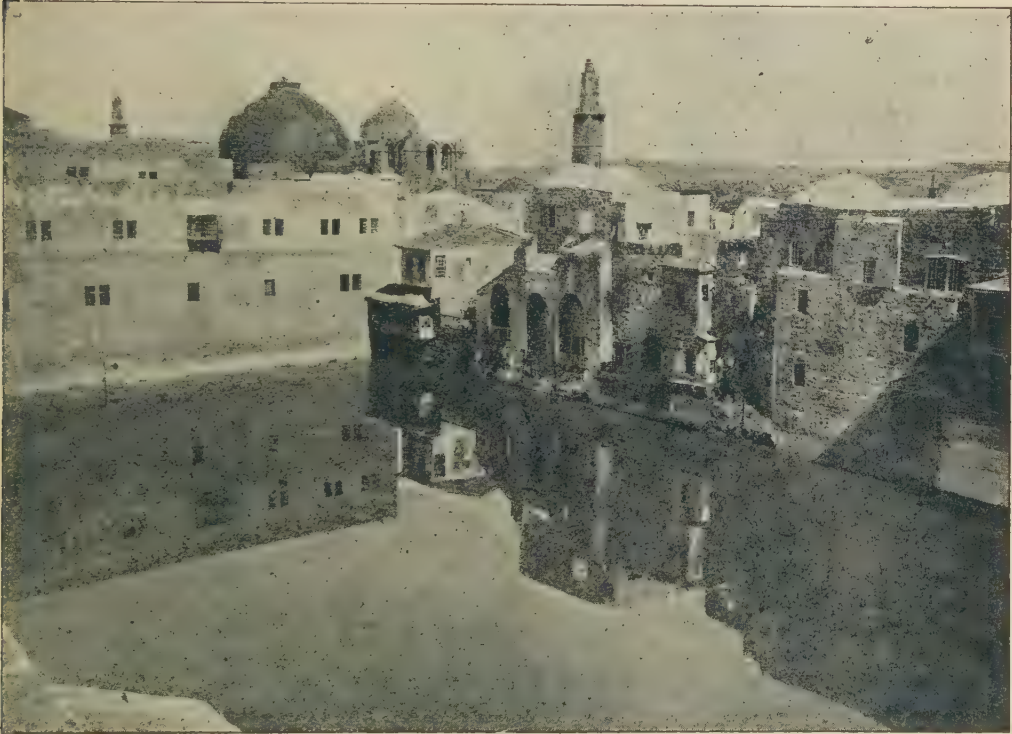
reservoir when suddenly Isaiah appeared. God had told him to meet Ahaz and say: "Be quiet; fear not, neither be faint hearted, for it shall not come to pass." The prophecy, both in word and action, showed that the nations combining against Judah would be destroyed. Isaiah also told them of a wonderful child which was to be born, and that he would bear a divine name and combine the excellence of both God and man.

The predictions were both fulfilled. Ere long Ahaz purchased the alliance of Assyria. Soon after a great battle took place with Syria, and while Judah lost two or three generals yet Syria was conquered. The second prediction came true in the birth of Ahaz's son, who was named Hezekiah. Hillel, one of the greatest Jewish teachers, said the nation need not look for a Messiah, for he had already come in the person of Hezekiah, who ascended the throne when a mere boy. Hezekiah expected immortality, and for this reason did not provide for a successor nor did he marry until a seemingly fatal illness aroused him. He was a great scholar, statesman, and poet, and the first to gather together the sacred books of his nation. When he became king he not only restored the temple service, but the palace in Jerusalem again became celebrated for the costly collection of silver, gold, and jewels. The shields which had been a glory in the days of Solomon, again glowed on the walls of the tower. The cities, towns, and villages felt the inspiration of his genius. The country districts enlarged their flocks and herds. The vine and olive were made to flourish. He not only took care of the ancient aqueducts, but he hollowed the solid rock in the city itself for a reservoir. The words of his reign were "Peace and Truth." A good type of the Messiah's kingdom.

Up to a certain age Hezekiah floated on the same golden sea of pleasure as Uzziah and Ahaz, and perhaps would always have been like them, but suddenly the prophet Micah came into an assembly where he was present, and uttered such words as to change his whole career. He described the nobles as sitting down to a feast—a feast of flesh and bones of the poor. He said that the priests ever were mercenary and that the prophets were traitors; that they were selling their divinations for money; that they dispensed blessings or threats according to the food supplied by their disciples. He further told them that it would be a blessing when the order became extinct. He said "God with us" was a mere saying, it had no meaning or influence on their lives, and that the very place where they stood would become a heap of ruins.

When he had finished his message the people stood silent. Hezekiah became the supreme man of the hour. He became penitent and because of the repentance the prediction did not fall upon his reign, and Jerusalem, like Nineveh, was saved. Henceforth, the nation at

peace was compared to a gentle dew, and in war it was likened to a strong bull treading his enemies on the threshing floor. The message of Micah lay like the life of spring at the roots of the nation ; soon the land blossomed with the good things. The first sign of life was the opening of the long closed doors of the Temple. The priests hung back, but the kindred order of Levites, nearer to the people, heartily joined the king and nobles in expiating the neglect and sin of the



THE POOL OF HEZEKIAH AT JERUSALEM.

nation. It was a joyful time. The people came up again to the Pass-over. Hezekiah now made a radical change in the worship. From time immemorial the people had worshiped in "the high places," on which stood an altar where oil, honey, flour and other things were offered. In Jerusalem these rites were combined with the worship of the Brazen Serpent. Hezekiah removed all this; he said that the Sacred Serpent was brass and brass only. The people were alarmed and shocked. But Hezekiah was right; the scattered devotion had gone astray; the many altars had closed the Temple doors ; the distant worship had



drifted into local superstition. The nation needed a strong heart; they found it in him.

The event which follows shows that God aids those who return to simplicity and truth. The King of Assyria, Sennacherib by name, was on his way to conquer Egypt. His approach toward Jerusalem was spectacular. His long lines of chariots climbed slowly the steeps which separated him from his dominions. He did not come to conquer Palestine. His object was to conquer Egypt, still the greatest of the powers of the world. But a soldier with a desire for conquest like Sennacherib's could scarcely leave a city like Jerusalem behind, and none were surprised that he decided to take it at any hazard. The towns which he took on the way succumbed like the yielding clay to the footprints of a giant.

Hezekiah was strong and brave. So far he had splendidly maintained his country's independence, but before this huge army he paid the tribute demanded. He even stripped the gold from the gates of the Temple to satisfy the Assyrians' craving for this metal. After the tribute had been paid, the citizens of Jerusalem crowded the walls to watch the army pass on its way to Egypt. They did not look upon the tribute as a subject for humiliation. They rather rejoiced—laughed and feasted to think they had gotten off so well. But Isaiah grieved deeply. In the midst of the people's feasting a voice spake to him saying: "Surely this iniquity shall not be purged from you till ye die." Hezekiah then attempted to make an alliance with Egypt, but Isaiah protested against this alliance, asking him to trust in God to protect them from future molestations. Hezekiah responded nobly to the prophet's appeal. By an effort which has given him a great name, he put his city in order and made preparation for a great test of endurance. He even destroyed the springs and diverted the water courses lest they supply an enemy. He inspected and put in order every conceivable vantage point lest it be attacked. He assembled the people in the square and addressed them to the effect that henceforth they would not be conquered.

When Sennacherib heard of this he was well on toward the border of Egypt, but he detached a portion of his force under Tartan to return and bring Hezekiah to terms. When the general, with two eminent officers, neared the walls he was met by three of the chief officers of

Judah. The Assyrians spoke in the Hebrew language so that all could understand. The Jewish leaders implored them to speak in their own language, knowing that it would not influence the common people, but as their purpose was to influence the people, they would not desist. Their speech indicated that the Assyrians had as yet never known what

defeat meant. Hezekiah was so wrought over their return that he put on sackcloth and ashes and fled to the temple. A formal letter, substantially the same as the words addressed by the envoys to the people, was sent directly to him. When the Assyrians had delivered their message, they returned to their camp and awaited Hezekiah's decision. Hezekiah, in the meantime, took the letter into the Holy of Holies and laid it before God. All was so obscure that he could get no direct answer from



HEZEKIAH SHOWING  
HIS RICHES.

God. The darkness seemed to hide Him, but an answer came from Isaiah the Prophet. He had always hoped; he still had faith. He incited all to courage by saying: "He shall not come into this city nor shoot an arrow here, nor come before it with shields, nor cast up a bank before it."

Upon Isaiah's faith and Hezekiah's devotion everything was now

staked. The night closed on Jerusalem with a dread darkness, but the morning brought news of deliverance so wonderful that the annals of history have not a parallel. "It came to pass that the Angel of Jehovah went forth and smote in the camp of the Assyrians a hundred and four score and five thousand." However accomplished, the camp was a vast cemetery. After that time no other Assyrian army ever touched the Jordan. The power of Nineveh vanished from the earth. Hezekiah's letter had been answered. The people broke into songs of joy. Isaiah summed all up in the following words: "Be strong and courageous; be not afraid or dismayed of the King of Assyria nor for all the multitude that is with him; for there be more with us than with him; with him is an arm of flesh, but with us is the Lord, to help and to fight our battles." He taught throughout his life that the "remnant," if faithful, would conquer; that the few against the many would win.

Hezekiah, now reduced by the awful strain, fell sick. Not until then did he learn that he was mortal. The sunlight and the earth were dear to him. Turning his face to the wall he prayed for life. Isaiah told him that he should live. Not long after, an embassy from the rising city of Babylon came to congratulate him on his success in being delivered from the Assyrians. Hezekiah now felt flattered and in his pride was over-solicitous in explaining all to Babylon. When Isaiah heard of the visit and how Hezekiah had shown them everything, he put aside the curtain of the future, and told him that Babylon would some day come and take away the treasures he had gathered. Hezekiah's years were years of beauty. At his death the whole nation mourned. His interment marked a departure in the history of the nation. He was the first king buried outside of the city of Jerusalem.



## CHAPTER XLIII

### JEREMIAH; OR THE BURNING OF THE SCROLL

JEREMIAH, the hero of this story, was the son of Hilkiah, a priest, who lived in the picturesque village of Anathoth, about three miles north of Jerusalem. The town was on a gentle eminence overlooking the plain. From the roof of Hilkiah's dwelling, which was flat, could be seen the heights of Gilead. South and east lay the purple

hills of Moab, and at its feet the blue waters of the sea. To the north stretched a vast fertile valley. It was in this "village of the echoes"

that Jeremiah—a gentle, sensitive and loving child—was born.

He came into the world at a sad age—a time when it was almost impossible to find an honest man. The nation had forgotten everything in a mad rush for money. Many prophets and priests, as well as the people, were dishonest. The king, Josiah by name, had reigned twelve years when Jeremiah received a call to become a prophet. No one seemed more ill-



A "BOOK OF THE  
LAW," WRITTEN BY MOSES.

fitted for this hard task than he. Although a priest by descent and a prophet by God's call, he still shrank from attacking older priests and prophets. The nobles of the land at this time were divided into two hostile parties, each holding diverse policies for the state. One prophesied the invincibility of Jerusalem; the other, her downfall. Isaiah upheld Jerusalem; Jeremiah predicted her doom. Isaiah said, "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as snow." Jeremiah, speaking from the standpoint of her moral condition, said with equal truth, "Can the Ethiopian change his skin or the leopard his spots?"

A "Book of the Law," written by Moses, was about this time found and presented to the king. It revealed a new ideal and helped to bring about a reform. The king sought by his power to bring the

nation back to God. He realized that the nation was in peril. Jeremiah, thinking it was too late, did not participate in the reform. He thought it best for the movement to go to its full limit. Soon after, Josiah died, and his second son, Shallum by name, was placed by the people on the throne in preference to the rightful heir. On Shallum's election to the crown he took the name of Jehoahaz, meaning "The Lord's Possession." There was something in the young prince which endeared him to the people, although disorganization came about, which terminated when the country fell into the hands of Necho, King of Egypt. Jehoahaz was first carried captive to Riblah and then to Egypt. A cry of grief went up



HYPOSTYLE COURT OF THE GREAT TEMPLE  
AT KARNAK.

for him. Besides the love the people bore for him, he was the first king of Judah to die in exile and it sorely grieved the nation. The elder brother was seated on the throne as a vassal of the King of Egypt. This made Judah a state in the Egyptian empire. Jehoiakim, the new ruler, restored heathen rites and in all things ruled like a heathen monarch. Forcing workmen to labor, he enlarged his palace, roofed it with cedar and painted it with vermilion. The purpose of these improvements was to allay public apprehension.

During his reign the great monitor of the nation was Jeremiah. He had not appeared in public since the day of mourning for Josiah. Now he came to the front in behalf of the prophet Urijah, who had been slain, and whose body had been refused burial. A vast assemblage were gathered when he came into the



CUTTING THE PARCHMENT INTO PIECES  
BEFORE THE KING.

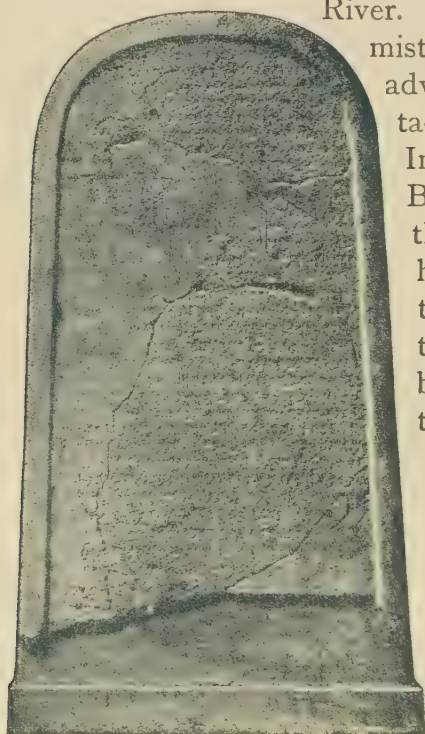
court of the temple. He arose and delivered a speech which fully presented his character and every form of his teaching. In that address were grief, appeal, invective, irony and lamentation. His words keenly touched the issues which were then agitating the nation's breast. In



closing, he told them that the temple even, in whose duration they seemed to put an eternal trust, would surely pass away. As an example of God's punishment, he bade them look at the ruins of Shiloh, thirty miles distant. The people present had all dwelt upon the ruins, and the comparison was worse than they could stand. Some rushed up to end his life, but he was rescued and carried to the court of the king. From the judgment-seat was heard the prophet's plea for his own life. Worldly were the people, and reckless, but Jeremiah's courage, character and lucid appeal struck them with such force that they acquitted him on the spot, saying: "This man is not worthy to die, for he has only spoken to us in the name of our God."

The doom which he predicted was fast approaching. It now began to appear as if the old power of Egypt and the new empire of Babylon would meet and decide the mastery of the world. And true to prophecy, ere long the two bodies met at Carchemish on the Euphrates River. It resulted in Babylon's becoming sole

mistress of the world. On the return of the advancing army, Judah stood open to attack. All turned to Jeremiah for advice. In a vision given him by God, he saw that Babylon at so late an hour was irresistible, that it would be better to yield. He loved his country, but he saw that her larger interests were beyond his countrymen, and told them to submit to Babylon. It was best, he said, to sacrifice themselves for the temple and the institution. *To save them, to retain them, he would readily lay down his life.* But no life was required. Submission was the only requirement. The Babylonian invasion was a temporary matter. Truth and Jerusalem were eternal. He turned his thoughts from the present invasion to a better day. Did it cost him much?



THE MOABITE STONE.

From original in the Louvre, Paris, narrating the acts of Mesha, King of Moab, B. C. 890.

Within the city was a tribe of Rechabites, which had come up to share

## JEREMIAH; OR THE BURNING OF THE SCROLL



BRIDGE AT JERUSALEM. ENTRANCE TO CÆSAREA PHILIPPI.

the fortunes of the city. They were of the family of Jethro, the father-in-law of Moses. They built no houses and drank no wine. They were true to the vow and tradition of their father, who vowed not to live in a house or to take strong drink. Through the long centuries these people remained unchanged in the midst of change. They now came to Jerusalem in the nation's peril. Jeremiah took the Rechabite chief into a room where no human eye could see nor ear hear them, and offered the Rechabite a drink. The drink, *as Jeremiah expected, was refused*. The prophet tested the Rechabite not to entice the man, but to teach a lesson to Judah. When reciting the story to the people of his nation, he said this vow was performed to keep the word of an earthly father. Israel should be greater in keeping the vow to God. They have taken covenant belonging to Jehovah. Once, down in the valley of Hinnom, Jeremiah watched the potter, who placed the formless clay on the wheel, and saw that the invisible idea in the potter's mind soon became the cup on the potter's wheel. He learned there a lesson for himself. He carried the lesson home, and when gazing on the scenes of idolatry at Tophet, remembered that all these things were

clay in God's hand. The invisible in the mind of Jehovah would work wonders more great than the artisan at the wheel. The potter did not work by caprice. A definite thought was in his mind. The same was true with God. He worked with a plan, giving to each life that which the life should have.

Mounting the steep hillside, he came into the Temple Court. The paralysis of fear having passed away, he was seized by the officer of the Temple, imprisoned and put on the rack. Here his spirit rose and in the sternest of efforts he poured out his soul in warning. Then his strength seemed to die, and sinking by reaction from the soldier's height he had attained, he plunged into that gloom which only the loftiest souls can experience. *He knew that he was misunderstood by men, he felt that he was deserted of God.* One friend alone remained with him; his name was Baruch. In prison he resolved to write down all his prophecies. The prison became an office for Jeremiah. Baruch was a scribe. Taking the parchment, and separating his work into columns, he wrote with his pen the dictations of Jeremiah. A day for the reading to the people was set. Baruch read the paper to the vast crowd assembled for the national fast. Baruch then went before the council, and seating himself like all eastern teachers, read the contents. They were struck with terror, perceiving the danger both of the Prophet and Baruch. Hiding the scroll in the apartments where they were sitting, they proceeded to the king's presence, reciting to the fierce and lawless monarch the fearful contents of the scroll.

A courtier, Jehudi, was requested to read the writings to the king. The king was seated before an open brasier, filled with lighted charcoal, by which he was warming himself. When three or four columns had been read, he seized a knife, which scribes wear for the purpose of erasures, cut the parchment into pieces, and threw them into the brasier, where they were at once consumed. There was no grief, no tears, no rent garments. The time of repentance was gone; the king was morally dead. The incident and the contents alone remained indelible in the nation's memory. Baruch was in despair. His mission had failed. "Then took Jeremiah another roll and gave it to Baruch the scribe, the son of Neriah, who wrote therein from the mouth of Jeremiah, all the words of the book which Jehoiakim, the King of Judah, had burned in the fire, *and there were added besides unto them many like words.*"

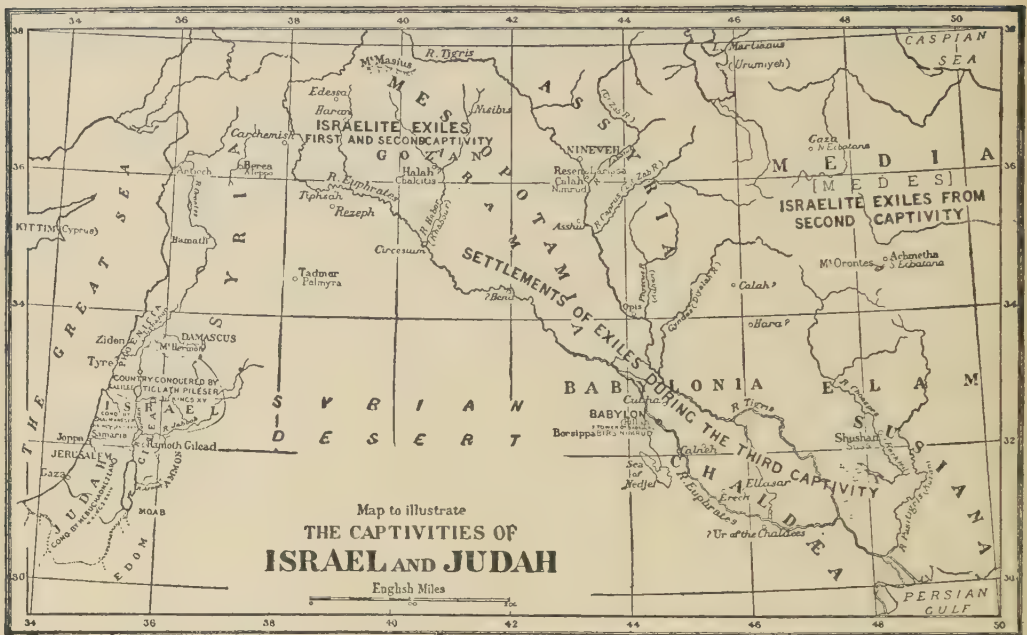


This was a new era. The book was to live, to outlast the knife and the brasier, to speak when foe and friend had gone. The book is still read. The king was long ago forgotten.

The King of Judah gave way to the King of Babylon only to revolt again, but in the midst of confusion he died. No tears were shed, nor funeral service held over his body. His son, Jechoniah, or Coniah, took the crown. Events now crowd in rapidly and dimly; all is like a mist which hangs over a city. Nothing is quite plain. Nehushta, the mother of the young king, was a woman of influence and character. Again the invading army beat against the city walls. Nehushta and her son, unwilling to see the city and people perish, went out of the gates in the usual garb of mourning and sat down before the conqueror as submissive suppliants. This saved the nation. In deep and sorrowful remembrance of the humiliation and sacrifice, the gate through which they passed to captivity was walled up. The sympathy felt for the youthful sovereign and his mother was profound. They thought of him, talked of him, wept over him, wrote about him. He was the "lion's cub," and spoken of as "the last of the house of David." The prophecy of Jeremiah, so singular in form, was fulfilled. "The topmost branch of the royal cedar" had been plucked off by "the eagle of Babylon." Jeremiah followed the exiles with loving and tender message, brightening and softening the hardship of exile. The city remained; the temple stood. Jeremiah rallied the remnant. When the dirge of Jeremiah over



TREADING THE WINE PRESS.



the captive king closed, the prophet burst into a strain of hope; a sunburst on the clouds of the breaking storm. His theme was the future sovereign of Israel—the King of Righteousness.

## CHAPTER XLIV

### JEREMIAH; OR THE DESTRUCTION OF JERUSALEM

THE Lord had appeared to Jeremiah, telling him that owing to the disloyalty of Israel He had given the lands unto Nebuchadnezzar, the king of Babylon, and that all nations should serve him, and that those nations that would not put their necks under the yoke of the

King of Babylon would be punished. He said further that false prophets would arise telling the people of Judah that this was not so; that God would free them if they demanded freedom.

So the Lord cautioned Jeremiah to keep watch and prevent His people from following the false prophet. The king who reigned over Judah in Coniah's place took the name of Zedekiah, holding in mind the thought of Jeremiah, that the future king of Judah would be righteous. Zedekiah endeavored to pull the nation together,



JEREMIAH WARNED  
HANANIAH.

and, though submitting to the power of Babylon, he said they could yet have peace, for they all worshiped the one true God. For a time the policy of Jeremiah was followed to the letter. The nobles who went as ambassadors to Babylon were friends of Jeremiah and endeavored to place matters in a favorable light before



Nebuchadnezzar, saying they would concede to his wishes. Jeremiah himself went to Babylon with one of the embassies, and altogether they took the oath of allegiance to Babylon in the name of God. But ere long intrigue on the part of those favorable to Egypt wrought ruin upon Judah by causing Zedekiah to break his oath of allegiance. Jeremiah knew the full import of the king's action. He took deliberate and yet decided action in the matter. As he, himself, had been one of a party to take the oath, he at least would not be one of the party to violate it. To show his disapproval of the broken oath, he put on and wore a wooden collar, typifying the yoke sealed by God. The wooden collar was a sign of slavery and captivity. With this upon his shoulders he visited the foreign delegates who had come up to Jerusalem to take part in the revolt against Babylon. Having visited them, he came before the king in the same guise. He was by some deemed a traitor; by others, a madman.

In the meantime, and just as God had said, a false prophet, by name of Hananiah, came and not only told the people that they should proclaim freedom, but he broke off the wooden yoke from Jeremiah's neck, signifying that all would be restored to the temple. Jeremiah was sick with grief and warned Hananiah that by breaking the yoke of *wood* he had forged one of *iron* for the nation. Furthermore, he told Hananiah that because he had spoken falsely, God would cause his death within a year. It is interesting to note that what Jeremiah said came true. Within two months Hananiah passed away.

Jeremiah never entered the Temple court again. In due time the forces of Babylon, that they might restore order, moved up to invest Jerusalem. During the siege, the King of Egypt made a diversion in favor of Judah. This compelled the Babylonians to leave Jerusalem for a time and advance to meet the new foe. During this temporary respite, many of the inhabitants of Jerusalem made their escape. The nobles, feeling that Babylon would lose, compelled Nebuchadnezzar to revoke the Emancipation Proclamation, which had been solemnly performed before God. Against this act of perfidy Jeremiah raised his voice in a manner worthy of a true prophet, but of no avail. This was his last public address. Wearied with the continued strife for national liberty, and depressed by the moral strain, he decided to leave the city, and walked as far as the north gate—"the gate of Benjamin"—when an

officer arrested him as a deserter. The nobles were delighted, for his capture gave them an opportunity to pay back old scores. They first beat him, then imprisoned him in a dungeon formed out of the wall of a private house.

The king, who was his friend, at great personal risk removed him from this prison to one controlled by the state and attached to the palace. This gave Jeremiah an opportunity to plead with the king for the nation, the city and the temple. He also fearlessly warned the king of the consequence of the course he was now pursuing. In the meantime, the nobles, in spite of their unfriendly feeling, could not do without Jeremiah's advice. They repeatedly sought his counsel, and he ever helped and warned them. Finally, however, Jeremiah was taken from the palace prison and imprisoned in an old well. There was no water in the well, but the bottom was covered with so deep



JEREMIAH IMPRISONED IN AN OLD WELL.

a slime that it threatened his life. Here he remained until an Ethiopian—a guard of the royal harem—came to his rescue. He obtained permission to remove him. With old garments from the king's wardrobe to place about his person, the Ethiopian drew him out and took him back to the palace prison. This time he was granted





FALLEN JERUSALEM.



more freedom and allowed the companionship of his friend, the scribe, Baruch. The city was finally cut off from the outer world in the tenth day of the month of January, 587 B. C. This is one of the "black days" in the Jewish calendar.

There are two things in the life of Jeremiah at this time which especially interest us. One is the grateful mention of Ebed-melech,



WEeping OVER JERUSALEM.

the Ethiopian who befriended him, and his prediction concerning the Ethiopian's future during the siege of Jerusalem, which prediction came true; the second is regarding his faith in the future of Judah, which came about in the sale of the ancestral plot of ground at Anathoth. Jeremiah was the only heir; priority must be given him in a sale. What would he do with it now that the nation was going to pieces. The question was, would he buy? He then foretold that Israel would ere long return from captivity and again occupy the land; that the service of worship would be greater than ever, and that the temple would be more renowned and beautiful than at any time in her history. He promptly accepted the offer and in the presence of witnesses, among them Baruch, closed the purchase. He believed there was a future for the Israelites. This was a practical test of his

own prophecies. Here, the man who had been imprisoned as a traitor and a deserter, again inspired his countrymen.

The Babylonian army now surrounded Jerusalem. The method pursued to capture the city on this occasion was one they had frequently pursued with great success. Gigantic mounds were raised, overlooking the walls. On the summits of these forts were erected. From the forts showers of rocks and quantities of arrows were fired. The enemy, looking down into the streets of the doomed city, perceived that famine reigned. By favor of the king, Jeremiah had all along been supplied with bread, but the bread now failed and he felt the pinch of hunger. The nobles themselves were no longer prosperous looking. Their forms showed what they, too, were suffering. The king walked restlessly, showing the marks of care as well as of sorrow. The women of the city endeavored to cheer the hearts of the people by sitting in crimson robes and decked in jewels. But with all this show of gaiety they could not blind the eyes of the onlookers. There was this to their credit—they had determined blood in their veins. If the enemy raised a mound, Judah raised one in opposition. She contested every foot of the way. She could not believe that the city would fall. The people looked again and again at the temple—looked at it in the dark, in the sunlight, and when the moon clothed it in silver—all the time they said, “We are safe, the temple is here.” In Hezekiah’s day the city was saved by faith. They forgot that now the spirit was fanaticism rather than faith; that they were not wholly leaning on Jehovah. Some were, but many were not. Some of the priests were in the subterranean chambers of the temple casting up strange incense to the gods; others were bowing to the sun at morning, and still others trusting in charms, auguries and divinations.

Jerusalem had held out eighteen months; they would not believe that the end was near; they dared not, but at last the entrance was forced. The king, his family and attendants, got away safely through the gate which leads to the Jericho road, and were fleeing to a place of safety when some deserter informed the Chaldeans, and a hot pursuit followed. The royal party were overtaken by the Jordan fords. King Zedekiah, because of the oath which he broke, lost both his eyes and was taken to Babylon as prisoner. With the news of his capture a sigh went up from the lips of those who loved Judah. Zedekiah had



had an opportunity to do great things, but failed. Let us now return to Jerusalem. Nebuchadnezzar ordered the destruction of the temple, the palace, the houses of the nobles, and gates of the city. But where was Jeremiah? Can it be possible that he was released? Yes, he was taken to Ramah in chains to await the coming of Nebuchadnezzar. When the fact became known that he had imperiled his life to keep



THE JEWS' WAILING PLACE AT JERUSALEM.

his nation free from the guilt of a broken oath and from the rashness of an unsuccessful war, he was released and offered every honor Nebuchadnezzar's kingdom could bestow. But true to himself and his God, he refused everything, saying his lot was cast with his brethren at Jerusalem. The temple was gone, the city a ruin, but the Holy Land still remained. There was hope in the remnant. With the handful remaining he thought he could build a new commonwealth.

He left Ramah with high hopes, but when he came to the hill which overlooked Jerusalem he gazed on the desolation, and sitting down, wept. On the west side of the city is a grotto, called "The



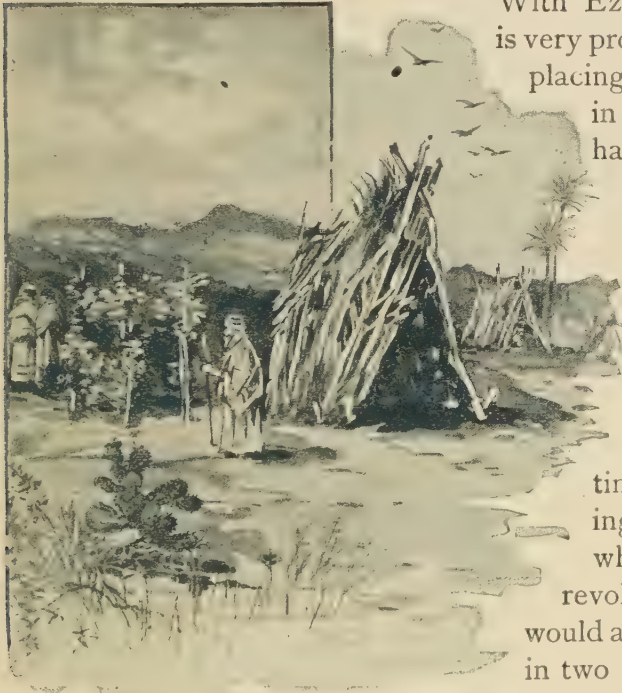
Grotto of Jeremiah." This is where Jeremiah is supposed to have lamented. That scene has been immortalized by Michael Angelo, in his frescoe in the Sistine Chapel at Rome. Jeremiah's dirge is: "How doth the city sit solitary, that was full of hope! how is she a widow, that was great among the nations! and princess among the provinces. how is she become tributary! Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass along the way? Behold and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow, that hath been done unto me." But in spite of his tears, the historian Josephus writes, "he would not go to any other spot in the world, and gladly clung to the ruins of his country and to the hope of living out the rest of his life with its surviving relics." He set himself to work in good earnest. For awhile his influence seemed to rise above all discouragements, but panics came on and the "remnant" fled to Egypt, carrying Jeremiah with them. We know not what became of him, the man who was "ever making intercession for the transgressors."

Other prophets, like Isaiah and Jonah, had implied that no predictions were subject to necessity, but were dependent on the moral state of those to whom they were addressed. Both blessing and cursing could be frustrated by the deeds of the person to whom they were given or to the nation warned. The saving of Nineveh is an example. Jeremiah taught the priests who trusted alone in the Ark and the temple that the loss of both would be a spiritual gain to the people. In this way Jeremiah's system of thought became constructive. He insisted that something better and more spiritual should take the place of the "formal and material" in the life of the children of Israel. He said: "I see that all things come to an end; but thy commandment is exceeding broad. Stand ye in the ways, and see and ask for the old paths, where is the good way, and walk therein, and *ye shall find rest for your souls.*"

## CHAPTER XLV

### EZEKIEL; OR THE GOSPEL OF THE SECOND LAW

THIRTY miles north of Babylon, on the Chebar, a branch of the Euphrates River, some Jewish exiles had settled. An organization existed among them somewhat similar to their own land. Here dwelt a priest and prophet, Ezekiel by name, who was also his own scribe.



THE EXILES' CAMP ON  
THE CHEBAR.

With Ezekiel the scholarly instinct is very prominent. He wrote a book, placing every prophecy and event in its order. In early life he had a vision. The scenes are not of Palestine, but of Asia. There was a constant communication between this colony of exiles and those left in Jerusalem. All matters which agitated one, disturbed the other. At this time there were agitators going backward and forward who preached the doctrine of revolt, and said that the exiles would all return to Jerusalem within two years. To frustrate this,

the Lord sent a vision to Jeremiah, who sent a

letter to the exiles giving them God's message: "Thus says Jehovah of Hosts, God of Israel, to all the captives! I have caused to be carried away from Jerusalem to Babylon. Live no longer in tents but build houses for yourselves and live in them. Plant gardens and eat their produce. Become permanent residents of the land, be not as sojourners in it. Take wives and beget sons and daughters, and take wives for your sons, and give your daugh-

ters to husbands, that they may bear sons and daughters, that you may increase there and not grow fewer. And seek the prosperity of the place to which I have caused you to be carried off, for in its prosperity you will find your own."

For seven years preceding the overthrow of Jerusalem, Ezekiel was absorbed in the visions which set forth the fate of his nation. Though he preached the truth, he needed an unshaken courage, for there were men constantly enthusing his countrymen with false hopes. His congregation was very small. They met in his home. Many came out of curiosity, and never came again. The prophets who preached revolt were listened to by crowds of people. Ezekiel, however, watched, worked and wrote. He ever prophesied and preached the siege of Jerusalem. His actions represented the state of his mind as well as the state of things. He often stood still or lay motionless for a year, representing the agony he could not speak. Sometimes he stirred a huge caldron, to show how the scum of the nation would be taken off. These and other things he acted out. He became the tragedian of a nation's gloom; the dramatist of a national sorrow. On the fateful day, when Jerusalem was fully invested, God said to him: "Son of man, behold I take away from thee the desire of thine eyes with a stroke; yet neither shalt thou mourn nor weep, neither shall thy tears run down." And sure enough, on that day his wife died; "the desire of his eyes" was taken by a "sudden stroke." He came from his dwelling where she lay dead, with no sign of mourning. He was full of grief, yet he appeared as one who never sorrowed.

Ezekiel was the representative of an advance in thought and in method. He was the prophet of the gospel of the heart, called "The Gospel of the Second Law." "And I will give them one heart and I will put a *new spirit* within you, and I will take the *stony heart* out of their flesh and will give them a *heart of flesh*, that they may walk in my statutes, and keep my ordinances and *do them*: and they shall be *my people* and I will be *their God*." Ezek. 11:19-20. Ezekiel shows what the "Spirit" will do for itself. The doctrine which startled his nation was that of *individual responsibility*. He advocated that a person could not trust in national descent or in a family name. The person was individually responsible. "When the wicked man turneth away from his wickedness, and doeth that which is lawful and right, he shall



surely live, he shall not die." This was the greatest of all the lessons of all the ages and taught that each one of us carries our own destiny. *"All souls are God's. The soul that sinneth, it shall die. He that hath withdrawn his hand from iniquity, he is just, he shall surely live."* Human responsibility was the great doctrine which Ezekiel was preaching when Jerusalem fell. This doctrine, and the fall of his country, ended the first part of his prophetic career. Following this was a long period of silence.

In the interval between the Captivity and the Restoration of his people, he told how Nebuchadnezzar would destroy the nations of Ammon, Moab, Edom, Philistia and Damascus. He told also about the great city of Tyre, which then was only a small town. Ezekiel said she would rise in glory and then pass out of existence. He called her a stately vessel. His view extended and he saw the great Assyrian empire fall with a



EZEKIEL'S VISION OF JERUSALEM.

crash. He gazed on Egypt and saw that she too would fall into the grave of the nations. This ended the second stage of his prophetic life. The third stage of his prophecy was a day ever memorable to the exiles on the Chebar; "in the twelfth year of their captivity, in the tenth month, and on the fifth day of the month," so the record runs, the prophet was disturbed in his soul. It was sunset. As the sunset ran into the dawn the vision brought a fugitive from old Jerusalem, who

broke into his presence, crying: "The city is fallen!" Ezekiel said, as the sunset was the beginning of another day, so in like manner was the sunset and dawn of Judah the beginning of better things for Israel and the world.

But more beautiful still was the closing vision of his life. In it he was taken to his native land, and there stood on a high mountain. A city appeared before him, and in that city a temple. The city was like Old Jerusalem, only enlarged. As he gazed, a stream of living water burst from the foundations of the temple and flowed freely down the hillside in the direction of the eastern gate, deeper and wider, until it was a vast river. The stream entered the Jordan plain, and when the waters reached the Salt Sea, or Sea of Death as it is sometimes called, new life began. Fish and other creatures sprang to life. Fishermen then gathered on the banks, commerce began to grow, vegetation sprang up everywhere, luxuriant and beneficent, and a diviner life came to Israel. Ezekiel's vision ended here. He did not live to see what his vision portrayed. The unfolding was left to the next epoch. He was exiled in the year 598 B.C., eleven years before the destruction of Jerusalem. God spoke to Ezekiel as the "son of man." To no other prophet is this applied, except to Daniel, and to him but once. The title is given to Ezekiel more than a hundred times, foreshadowing in some way the Christ who stands before the world as the Son of Man!

## CHAPTER XLVI

### DANIEL; OR THE CAPTIVES IN THE GOLDEN CITY.

LET us now turn from Jerusalem to Babylon, the place where the Israelites went after leaving Jerusalem. Babylon was at this time the greatest city the world had seen and will probably ever see, yet, strange to say, not a single piece of architecture remains to tell of its greatness. The city, like a well built house, possessed a fine foundation. Its imposing situation, its natural defense and its facilities for commerce were all great factors in her development. At the time of the city's greatest prosperity, an arm of the Persian Gulf is supposed to have touched the city on the south. Out of the river Euphrates the people obtained material for brick, and bitumen for cement. The streets were wide and straight, running at right angles to each other—a rarity in that age. Other cities of that era built one-story

houses, but Babylon built them two, three and four stories high. A vast wall, three hundred feet high, rising out of a deep and wide moat,



DANIEL, SHADRACH, MESHACH AND ABEDNEGO BEFORE NEBUCHADNEZZAR.



screened and protected the city. On the summit was a driveway so broad that a chariot and four horses could make a turn. The city was especially celebrated for its picturesque gardens, known as hanging gardens. These were in the form of terraces raised one above another, frequently to a height of seventy feet. The royal palace was surrounded by a park seven miles in circumference.

The most prodigious piece of architecture was the Tower of Babel, restored by Nebuchadnezzar. The old idea was to make its top reach to heaven. It was built square upon square, till it attained the height of 600 feet. It exceeded in size any edifice devoted to divine worship. Here were kept the spoils of plundered cities. The court, army, navy, church, school and business made a scene as complex as it was brilliant and cosmopolitan. Every city, every court, every temple service elsewhere was as nothing compared to the glory of Babylon. The life of even the common people was to the Israelites a series of feasts and of songs. The Babylonians would have had the Jew happy too, for they asked them to sing "the songs of Zion," but the Jew hung his harp by the side of the palm and the willow, saying: "How can we sing the Lord's song in a strange land?" So they sat down "by the waters of Babylon and wept."

The sacred record tells us of her "merchandise of gold and silver, and precious stones, and of pearls, and of fine linen, and purple, and silk, and scarlet, and all wood of incense, and all manner of vessels of ivory, and all manner of vessels of precious wood and of brass and of iron and marble and cinnamon and odors and ointment and frankincense and wine and oil and fine flour and wheat and beasts and sheep and horses and chariots and slaves and souls of men; the shipmasters and all the company in ships, and sailors and as many as trade by sea, and the craftsmen and the merchants who were the great men of the earth." But this was not all; this empire of commerce, religion, art, science and beauty had at its head a genius worthy of it all. That head was Nebuchadnezzar. He was the lord of the known world. His dominions stretched from India on the east to Greece on the west. His reign constituted one-half of the length of the empire. To him is all glory. He rebuilt the city, and we can excuse him for saying: "Is not this great Babylon that I have built for the house of my kingdom, by the might of my power and for the honor of my majesty?" This was

the city into which the exiles came from Jerusalem. Among them were four of illustrious descent who came into prominence—Daniel, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego.

It was customary for the king to take the sons of monarchs or illustrious men into his palace, and there educate, clothe and feed them at his expense. Daniel, with his three friends, come to our notice by the officer's question, what they should eat, and their reply beseeching permission to eat plain food and the privilege of abstaining from strong drink. The officer, fearing they would appear ill-kept before the king, granted permission for a definite time of "ten days." The trial must

have justified Daniel's request, for Scripture says, "They were fairer than those who ate the king's meat." It was decided that Daniel and his three friends pursue a special course of study for three years, at the end of which time they were to be brought before the king. In the meantime, God gave them knowledge and skill in all learning and wisdom, and *He made Daniel understand visions and dreams.* At the end of the three years the king was so well pleased with their knowl-



"DANIEL INTERPRETS THE KING'S DREAM."

edge that he had their names enrolled among the wise men of the kingdom—a high position, but one which involved danger as well as honor. This danger manifested itself early in Daniel's life, for the king dreamed a dream, which he forgot, and ordered the death of the wise men if they could not tell the dream or interpret it.

While the chief captain was seeking means to carry out the king's command he came upon Daniel. The young man assured the captain that he could tell the dream and furnish an interpretation from the Lord of heaven and earth. Hastening to his three companions, Daniel asked them to pray that God would reveal the king's dream and that it might be interpreted to him. Their prayers were answered and Daniel was made the instrument of safety to himself, to his three friends, and the wise men of Babylon. When Daniel came before the king he said that it was not possible for any man to do what the king wished, but said that there was a God in heaven that revealed secrets, and that the dream had been revealed to him. "What thou sawest, O king, was a great image, with a head of gold, arms silver, and body brass, and even though the stone was not in anybody's hands, yet it struck the feet of the great image, breaking it into pieces like chaff, which a great wind carried away; that the stone grew wider and higher till it became a great mountain." Then Daniel said: "The interpretation is this, O king! Thou hast a great kingdom; all men are under thy dominion. Thou dost rule over them all. Thou art this head of gold. The silver, the brass, and the iron represent kingdoms which shall rise after thee. But thou sawest the stone which without hands struck the image and broke it. Know from this, O king, that the Lord will establish a kingdom which shall subdue all kingdoms and it shall never pass away." When Daniel had finished, the king made him ruler over the whole province of Babylon, and chief of the governors of the wise men. Daniel was now a great man, but men in high places are much observed, and especially by the envious people.

And so it proved. Honors brought trouble and danger to Daniel and his three friends. Shortly after, Nebuchadnezzar made a great image of gold and commanded that at a certain hour all people should fall down and worship it, and any one failing to do this should be cast into the fiery furnace. Some one reported to the king that Daniel's three friends had not bowed down to the image. The king ordered



them to be brought into his presence. They came, but refused to serve the image, saying if God willed it He could save them, but they would not bow down nor serve the gods of gold. The king ordered them to be taken to the furnace, which was heated to an extreme temperature, and cast into it. But note the strange sight shown in that furnace.



BELSHAZZAR'S FEAST.

The three men walked amid the fire and a fourth person accompanied them. As the king looked, he said very solemnly, "And the form of the fourth is like the Son of God." Then the king called them forth by their names, and said: "Oh, servants of the Most High, come forth." Nebuchadnezzar again tested Daniel's power to interpret dreams. He dreamed that he saw a tree, tall and fair. The branches were full of fruit; men and beasts were in the shade of it, and birds nested in the branches. A "watcher" stood by the tree, saying, "Cut it down, but let the stump be left. Take the stump, bind it with bands of iron till the dews and the rains of seven years shall fall upon it."

Daniel was again equal to the emergency. He said: "*Thou art that tree, O king; thy dominion fills the earth. The watcher is an*



THE FALL OF BABYLON.



angel. Thy life shall pass away from men for seven years and thou shalt be in the field and eat grass like an ox. The stump of the tree means thy kingdom shall return to thee when thou hast learned that the heavens do rule." Then Daniel said: "Wherefore, O king, let my counsel be acceptable to thee, and break off thy sins *by righteousness*, and thine iniquities *by showing mercy to the poor*; if it may be a *lengthening of thy tranquillity*." But Nebuchadnezzar did not mend his ways, and in a year from the time that Daniel interpreted the dream, he was walking in his palace looking at the splendor and glory of Babylon, when there fell a voice from heaven, saying: "O king Nebuchadnezzar, to thee it is spoken, the kingdom is departed from thee." True to Daniel's vision, the seven years passed away before his reason returned. In the meantime, God had added greatness to him. But the greatest thing which He gave him was a pure, gentle, and worshiping heart. His last words were: "*Now I Nebuchadnezzar praise and extol and honor the King of heaven.*"

Events rapidly carry us forward to the reign of Belshazzar, a grandson of Nebuchadnezzar, who reigned jointly with his father, and to whom was entrusted the defense of the city. How he carried out that trust is told to us in one thrilling scene—a feast given by Belshazzar. On this particular occasion the whole night was given up to feasting and drinking. During the dinner Belshazzar became inflamed with wine, and ordered the golden vessels which were taken from the temple at Jerusalem to be brought to him, that he and his princes might drink therein. The gods of stone, silver, wood and gold were ranged about the palace hall. Just as Belshazzar, holding a golden cup of the temple to his lips, suggested that they drink to the gods around them, behold, "in the same hour came forth fingers of a man's hand, and wrote over against the candlestick upon the plaster of the wall of the king's palace; and the king saw the part of the hand that wrote." The richly dressed people, soldiers in colored uniforms, and the music of instruments all made a scene indescribable. But when the king saw the mysterious hand glide in spectral silence, leaving the strange sentence on the wall, he arose to his feet, his cheeks paled, his eyes started and his knees shook with fear. Drunken a moment before, he was sober and fearful now. Then he raised his voice and the terror-stricken words he cried were: "Whosoever shall read this writing,



shall be clothed with purple and have a chain of gold about his neck, and shall be the *third ruler* in the kingdom."

There were already two rulers. The man who interpreted "the handwriting on the wall" was to be made the *third ruler*. At this fateful juncture, the wise men failed  
to interpret the writing. Evi-

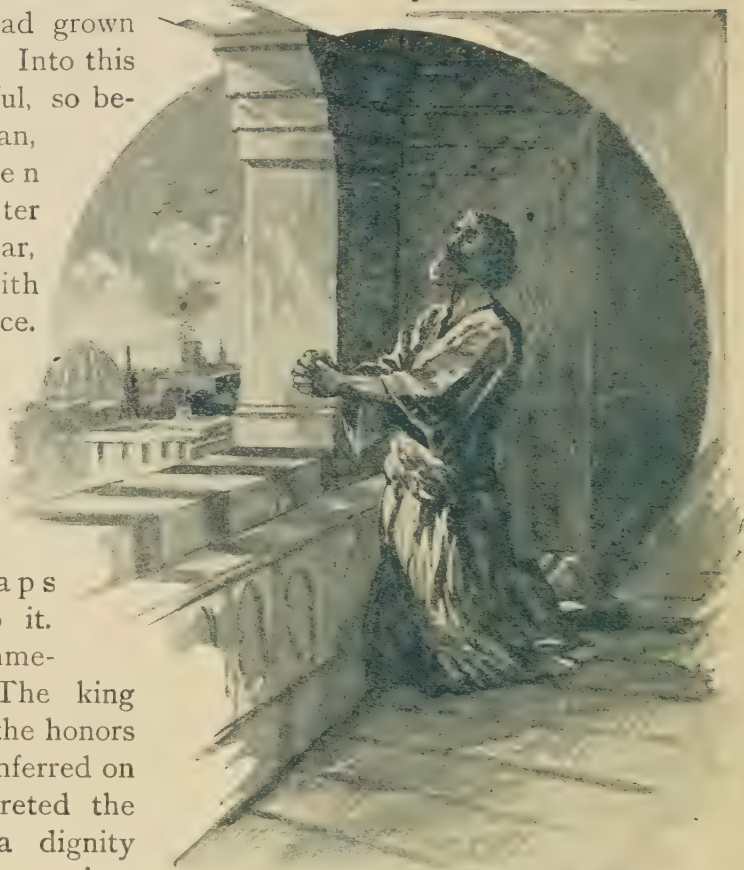
dently a panic had grown with the failure. Into this scene so wonderful, so beyond the pen of man, came the Queen Mother, a daughter of Nebuchadnezzar, and regarded with extreme reverence.

She was not able to interpret the writing, but she spoke the word which led the way out.

She said perhaps Daniel could do it.

So Daniel was immediately called. The king then told him of the honors that would be conferred on him if he interpreted the writing. With a dignity worthy of God's cause in a nation's crisis, he said he

did not desire a reward, but with God's help he would interpret the writing on the wall. Daniel briefly related the story of Nebuchadnezzar's life. Then he said to Belshazzar, "And thou, his son, O Belshazzar, hast not humbled thine heart, though thou knewest all this. Thou has not glorified the God in whose hand thy breath is. Because of this fact, the kingdom is divided and given to the Medes and the Persians." We do not know what the king did or said, except



DANIEL PRAYING FOR DELIVERANCE.

that he kept his word, and made Daniel the third ruler. He was clothed with the purple and the chain of gold was put on his neck. Only a mere skeleton of how Babylon was overcome is given in the Bible. "In that night was Belshazzar, the king of the Chaldeans, slain, and Darius the Median took the kingdom." Greek historians tell us that the waters were diverted and the hundred bronze gates along the vast river opened to the invaders and the feasters were caught at their tables. The impossible had at last happened. "Babylon is fallen, is fallen," was the cry which ran through the whole earth.

Daniel's conduct on that night made him the one figure with whom the conqueror treated. King Darius made him even greater than he was before, but again honor brought him the malice of men. The presidents and princes sought to find evil in him. They persuaded Darius to sign a decree that no one should offer prayer to any one but the king for a space of thirty days. The penalty for non-compliance was that the culprit should be cast into the den of lions. "King Darius signed the decree." What effect had this on Daniel? "Now when Daniel knew that the writing was signed, he went into his house; and *his windows being opened in his chamber toward Jerusalem, he kneeled*



DANIEL IN THE LION'S DEN.

*upon his knees three times a day, and prayed, and gave thanks before his God, as he did aforetime.*" He knew that a prayer would deliver him, so when he was taken to the den of lions he had no fear. The king could not revoke the law, but he respected Daniel, and passed a sleepless night, knowing that unless his God delivered him he was doomed. In the morning the king went to the "den," crying, "O Daniel, servant of the living God, is thy God, whom thou servest continually, able to deliver thee from the lions?" Daniel replied, "My God hath sent his angel, and hath shut the lions' mouths, that they have not hurt me." Daniel arose, a strange figure in Jewish history. For four centuries his countrymen looked back to him as their prophet and statesman. He lived for no party or class; therefore, in each crisis of the nation, he was the one to whom all looked. Any young man who desires to devote his life to the service of the state can study the life of Daniel with increasing profit from day to day. To follow his life is to meet danger, but surely it will be said at last, as it was said of him, "So Daniel prospered."



## CHAPTER XLVII

### THE RETURN TO JERUSALEM

THE fall of Babylon marks the end of primeval history. The advent of the Medo-Persian empire was the beginning of classical history. The fall of the city was no surprise to the Jew, for when Seraiah went up to Babylon before the fall of Jerusalem, Jeremiah gave him a scroll on which were written the details of the destruction of Babylon. Jeremiah instructed Seraiah to read the scroll, then take a stone, fasten it to the scroll, and throw it far out into the Euphrates River, saying as

he did so: "Thus shall Babylon sink." There, deep in the river's depth, lay the written doom of the empire, but the river kept the secret. The nations which started in the race of dominion with Babylon were gone. Babylon now stood solitary in her imperial grandeur. Nebuchadnezzar, with the eye of a genius, said: "I have made completely strong the defenses of Babylon." But the Hebrew prophets turned their gaze to the north, where a new empire had been growing.

Real history seems to begin with this movement. Progress opens never to stop again. As is usual in such a case, a man comes with the events. That must always



SERAIAH CASTING THE SCROLL INTO THE RIVER.

be, for that is God's way. This man—Cyrus, King of Persia—arose in the year 560 B.C. When young, he was a hostage at the capital of the Median king. This enabled him to see the strength and weakness of the power to which his father's kingdom was tributary. That knowledge served him in good stead, for when he ascended the throne he made preparation to take Media into his kingdom, which he subsequently accomplished. Isaiah had spoken long before of the Gentile race as the hope of the world. This was the man who was to fulfill that prophecy. The Gentile Cyrus was to be the Shepherd of the Israelites and of all the world beside. It was the carrying out of the old, old prophecy, that "Japheth should dwell in the tent of Shem." 'Cyrus' character differed from other old time conquerors. He was not a despot, on the contrary he endeavored to be just. He became the Jewish liberator and patron, more than a sovereign. He believed in the One True God. His faith was simple and spiritual. No wonder that his countrymen built him a tomb of snow-white marble and placed him in a golden coffin and wrote simply "Cyrus the King" on the tomb!

It was to the Cyrus that the hopes of Israel now turned. Jeremiah and Ezekiel alike had predicted with the utmost certainty that their countrymen would return in two generations. The day which saw their anticipations realized was like the day that the reaper brought home the golden sheaves. The very sea which came up to Babylon's shore was asked to join in the chorus. The prophet had said: "Comfort ye, comfort ye, my people, saith your God. Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and say unto her that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned, for she hath received at the Lord's hands double for all her sins." The words which gave them permission to return came from an alien king, but still God's liberator and benefactor. "Now in the first year of Cyrus, King of Persia, that the word of Jehovah by Jeremiah might be fulfilled, Jehovah stirred up the spirit of Cyrus, King of Persia, that he made a proclamation throughout all his kingdom and put it in writing, saying: . . . The Lord God of heaven . . . hath charged me to build the house of the Lord . . . which is in Jerusalem." The return began in the year 536 B.C. All did not go back; the "ten tribes"—those taken away by the Assyrians—never returned. Many who came to Babylon even did not go back. The land was rich, the city beautiful. Some of them became



LET EVERYTHING THAT HATH  
BREATH PRAISE THE LORD.

nobles in the Persian court.

Though they maintained communication with their brethren in Palestine, they remained where they had grown wealthy. The whole number which went out was 29,337 souls. Among these were 200 minstrels and twelve chiefs. The leader was the grandson of the beloved and lamented King Jehoiachin, the last direct heir of the House of David. All the names of those composing the army were kept in a register. The accuracy of it was tested a century later by a most rigid examination, to exclude from the list those who could not prove their descent. In the center of the army were carried the sacred vessels of the temple, those which had brought Belshazzar to his fate. Each article was recorded three times. The entire number of articles numbered 5,499. Like a chain which bound the broken years together, these vessels bound the old and new together. A great concourse of people watched the procession depart from the gates of Babylon. Some went on camels, others on mules and horses, others afoot. The voice of singers filled the air full of music. This, with the tears of sorrow and of joy, made a scene never to be forgotten. It took four months to make the journey. Few springs gladdened their way, scant herbage caused much suffering, and fierce robbers roamed across the caravan track; but God went with them, and the desert was full of song. Since the majority



of those returning were of the tribe of Judah, the nation was called Judean, or Jew,—a singular name, full of glory and of reproach, of shame and of triumph. On their arrival, immediate steps were taken to rebuild the temple, which went forward slowly but was finished in the sixth year of Darius. All external things, to which hope and faith had clung, were gone. The Ark, the Tables of Stone, the Pot of Manna, the Rod of Aaron—all had disappeared. The Holy of Holies was empty—no golden cherub covered the mercy seat, neither did the golden shields shine in the sun. The High Priest wore his dress, but the breastplate with the stones or gems which revealed the will of God was gone.

There was now a completeness, solidity, and even splendor befitting the sanctuary and history of a great people. The grove of trees which was once a feature of the old temple was no more. It excited idolatrous worship and was therefore absent from the new temple. The temple court was divided into two parts. The outer was called "The Court of the Gentiles." This has been looked at in two ways. Either the broad spirit of the prophets was in this, which permitted a locality for heathen offering to be made, or it was due to the narrow spirit which would not allow the heathen to come near the place of offerings. Both views are contended for. But subsequent events tend to show that the move was narrow and sectarian, not broad and liberal.

The temple was dedicated in the spring of the year following, on the occasion of the feast of the Passover. It was the culmination of a hard won struggle, and the people sang with emphasis: "Hallelujah! Praise the Lord! Let everything that hath breath praise the Lord!"



TOMB OF CYRUS, KING OF TYRE.

## CHAPTER XLVIII

### ESTHER; OR THE FEAST OF PURIM

THE Kingdom of Persia greatly affected the imagination as well as the interests of the Jewish people. Owing to her friendliness, the decrees of her kings became almost sacred, and place is given them in the Book of Books. The Book of Esther throughout breathes a Persian atmosphere. Here we are permitted to enter familiarly into the king's palace at Shushan, where Ahasuerus, the king at this time, was giving a feast in the gardens. It was the third of his reign and the whole population was invited to the banquet. At the entrance stood



"WHAT SHALL BE DONE UNTO THE  
QUEEN BECAUSE SHE HAS NOT OBEYED  
THE COMMANDMENT OF THE KING?"



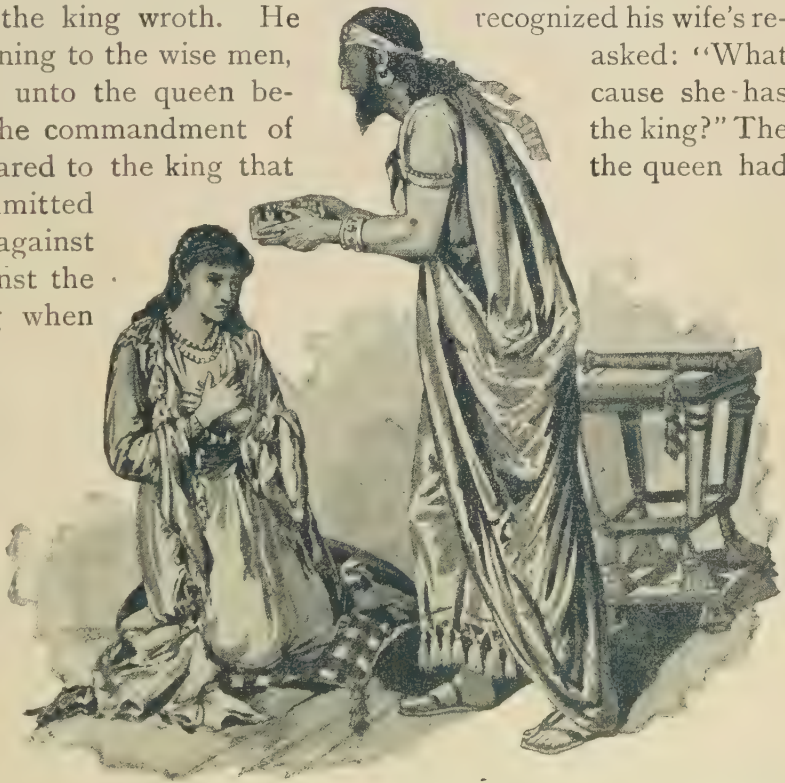


ESTHER BEFORE AHASUERUS.



pillars sixty feet high, and colossal bulls carved of marble guarded the entrance. On a golden throne sat the king, "and gave them drink in vessels of gold. And the drinking *was according to law*; none did compel; for so had the king appointed to all the officers of his house, that they should do *according to every man's pleasure*." Vashti, the queen, at the same time made a feast for the women in the seclusion of the house according to the Persians' custom. Both feasts were well in progress when suddenly the scene changed. Much drinking of wine had affected the king's judgment, and on the seventh day, *when his heart was merry*, the chamberlains were asked to bring Vashti the queen before the king, that he might show his guests her beauty. But the queen *refused to go at the king's command*. She stood for her rights at the peril of her life. She knew whom she was opposing, but she was woman enough to be willing to suffer death, if need be, rather than stand on exhibition before the drunken princes. Her refusal made the king wroth. He buke, and turning to the wise men, shall be done unto the queen be- not obeyed the commandment of wise men declared to the king that not only committed an offense against him, but against the people, saying when she refused to obey her husband, the king, she was setting an example of contempt before other women, and that the offense should not be allowed to pass unpunished.

recognized his wife's re-  
asked: "What  
cause she has  
the king?" The  
the queen had



KING AHASUERUS CROWNED ESTHER AND MADE HER HIS QUEEN

They said, "If it please the king let it be written among the laws of the Persians and the Medes, that Vashti come no more before King Ahasuerus; and let the king give her royal estate unto another *that is better than she*. And when the king's decree, which he shall make, shall be published, throughout all his empire . . . *all the wives shall give to their husbands honor*, both to great and *small*. And the saying pleased *the king and the princes*; and the king did according to the word of Menucan. For he sent letters into all the king's provinces, into every province according to the writing thereof, and to every people after their language, *that every man should bear rule in his own house*.

"After these things, when the wrath of King Ahasuerus was appeased, *he remembered* Vashti, and what she had done, and what was decreed against her." Gladly would he have reversed the decree, but the "law of the Medes and Persians was unalterable." He was then induced to issue a decree that the beautiful maidens of the kingdom should be brought before him that he might choose "a queen instead of Vashti," but before it was carried out, the king went on a campaign against Greece and was absent four years. From his defeat at Marathon (480 B.C.), he came home to choose a wife. Among those who came was Esther—a Jewess orphan—who by the direction of her uncle, Mordecai, did not reveal her nationality. She was so very beautiful, and affable in manner, that she not only won the hearts of the royal family, but captivated the sovereign, who placed the royal crown upon her head and made her queen instead of Vashti.

Mordecai was ever loyal to the king. Among many of the plots which gathered about the king's life was a conspiracy by two noblemen which Mordecai overheard. He at once made it known to Esther, and she in turn informed the king. When inquisition was made of the matter, and found to be true, both noblemen were hung on a tree. Among the many nobles was one Haman by name, who ever sought to win the king's favor. "After these things did Ahasuerus promote Haman, . . . and advanced him and set his seat above all the princes that were with him. And all the king's servants that were in the king's gate bowed and revered Haman; for the king had so commanded concerning him. But Mordecai *bowed not, nor did him reverence*."

The king's servants observed that Mordecai "transgressed" the

king's commandment, so they asked the king why it was. Getting no satisfaction, they finally told Haman, who became angry and said in reply that Mordecai was a Jew. The Jew and the Agagite had been enemies for centuries. The feud was rekindled at the gate of the king. Then Haman purposed a far-reaching and awful revenge—the destruc-



"THE ADVERSARY AND ENEMY IS THIS WICKED HAMAN."

tion of the Jew wherever he could be found. "And Haman said unto King Ahasuerus, There is a certain people scattered abroad and *dispersed* among the people in *all the provinces of thy kingdom*, and *their laws are diverse from all people*; therefore, it is not for the king's profit to suffer them. If it please the king, let it be written that *they may be destroyed*; and I will pay ten thousand talents of silver to the hands of those that have the treasures. And *the king took his ring from his hand and gave it unto Haman . . . the Agagite, the Jew's enemy*. And the king said unto Haman: The silver is given to thee, the people also, to do with them as it seemeth good to thee."



The writers sent out the decree, sealed with "the king's ring." It was a cold-blooded document—"to *destroy*, to *kill*, and to *cause to perish* all Jews, both *young* and *old*, *little children* and *women*, in *one day*. And the king and Haman *sat down to drink*, but *the city of Shushan was full of trouble*." Among the sorrowful people was Mordecai, who put on sackcloth and ashes, and made his head white with dust. When the news was brought to Esther of Mordecai's garb and condition, she sent him other raiment, but he received it not. She then sent a message, asking why he conducted himself thus. She could not go to him, for the law forbade her going outside her quarters. In reply he sent her a copy of the king's decree, with a request that she go before the king and make supplication in behalf of her nation. She replied that she would do what she could, but that no one could go into the presence of the king without his request, and that she had not been called in for thirty-one days. If any presumed to go before him without his command they would die, unless he held out his "golden scepter" that they might live.

To this, Mordecai replied that if the decree was not repealed she too would suffer death like all other Jews, and who knew but what she had come to the kingdom for this very purpose, to save them all? *He felt that deliverance would come* whether she acted or not, but he wanted his kinswoman to solve the problem for her people. Although God's name is not mentioned in the Book of Esther, yet He was in the prayer which Esther now asked her kinsman to offer, and to enter on a three days' fast, preparatory to her entrance before the king to buy back the life of her great people. The sublime part of the book is her high resolve, which culminates in the womanly yet national resolve: "And if I perish, I perish!" Well done, Woman! Would that the rest of the drama were as beautiful and gentle as this. On the third day, Esther stood in the king's presence, not prostrate, but erect, and the king extended the golden scepter. She advanced and invited the king and Haman to dine with her. And it came to pass that they went to the banquet that Esther had prepared. At the banquet the king said unto Esther: "What is thy petition, and it shall be granted thee?" Then answered Esther with mastery: "Come again to-morrow and dine with me." Haman went out, called his wife, his kinsmen and his friends, and with pride told them of all the honors bestowed by the queen, and the

honor awaiting him again on the morrow. But his evil nature rose uppermost, and he expressed his hatred in the words: "Yet all this availeth me nothing so long as I see Mordecai the Jew sitting at the king's gate." "Then said Zeresh his wife, and all his friends unto him, Let a gallows be made of fifty cubits high, and to-morrow speak thou unto the king that Mordecai may be hanged thereon; then go thou in



MORDECAI TRIUMPHANT.

*merrily* with the king unto the banquet. And the thing *pleased* Haman and he *caused the gallows to be made.*"

At the second banquet Esther told the king what had been done, and she asked for her own life and that of her people. Ahasuerus asked who had presumed to lay her life and that of her people under ban. "And Esther said: The adversary and enemy is this wicked Haman. Then Haman was afraid before the king and queen. And the king was wroth." Harbona, one of the king's chamberlains, mentioned the fact that Haman had erected a gallows fifty cubits high for

Mordecai. Then said the king: "Hang him thereon." So they hung Haman on the gallows they had made for Mordecai. The providence of the matter here consisted in the fact that when Haman cast lot, it fell in the last month and the thirteenth day, so that the new decree had plenty of time to reach the people. "And Mordecai went out from the presence of the king in royal apparel of purple and white, and with a great crown of gold and with a garment of fine linen and purple, *and the city of Shushan rejoiced and was glad.*" "Mordecai the Jew was next unto King Ahasuerus, and great among the Jews, and accepted of the multitude of his brethren, seeking the welfare of his people and speaking peace to all his seed."



## CHAPTER XLIX

### EZRA AND NEHEMIAH; OR THE LAWYER AND THE CIVIL ENGINEER

AFTER the temple was completed, there was a silence of many years. The Bible takes up the thread of the story again about seventy years after the finishing of the temple. The people settled down to a routine life. They became intimate with other nations, even marrying and giving in marriage without restraint. Jerusalem became a busy place. Beasts of burden



KING ARTAXERXES ISSUING THE DECREE.

went to and fro in all directions, laden with fruit and grains. Fishermen and sailors brought up their wares and fish from Tyre. The bazaars were thronged daily, and especially on market day, to purchase goods or to exchange coin with the money changers. Though Jerusalem was busy, it was not fully inhabited, and for some reason had been stunted in growth. The walls were still unfinished and bore the marks of the old siege. Ere long the poor began to sink into the condition

of serfs. The city looked to Babylon for guidance. Its resources were still there. Had it not been for two men who came forward and helped enlarge the national life, it is a question how matters would have shaped themselves. The first of these was Ezra. He was of priestly descent, but eminent as a scribe and lawyer. "For Ezra had prepared his heart to seek the law of the Lord and to do it, and to teach in Israel statutes and judgments." He studied "The Law" in the Jewish school of Babylon some time and then decided he would carry his knowledge to his countrymen in Jerusalem.

Permission was granted him. Ezra was a descendant from Aaron. There was great courage in him. He had faith in God, and inspired the people more than their armies. Experiencing, as Ezekiel had, the "Hand of God," he impressed his followers with the power of the Invisible Support. "I was strengthened as the hand of my God was upon me," were his inspiring words. With Ezra went a great concourse of people. They carried a decree made by Artaxerxes, the king, and therefore were fully armed with the necessary power. Ezra carried great treasures for the temple and his people. In going out he had told his monarch that he who trusted God needed no armies. The pilgrims went out without a soldier to guard them. They left everything to God. On the twelfth day out, they rested at "the river of Ahava." "Then I proclaimed a fast there at the river Ahava, that we might afflict ourselves before our God *to seek of Him a right way for us* and for our little ones and for our substance." They were in the camp for three days, resting and seeking guidance, proving that God was better than all the soldiers of the world. In the river bed, amid the flowers of spring, they re-dedicated themselves to God. Their trust was never put to shame, for they reached Jerusalem safely with all their treasure.

Ezra's zeal for the law was brought out, not on a seemingly great issue, but on one which was thoroughly studied. Our age would not sanction it, neither would Jesus nor Paul. The question arose regarding the relation of the Jew to the heathen. His was the very highest authority for marriage with the outside population from the time of Abraham. Paul is wise when he says the believing one sanctifies the unbelieving; at least, a noble tolerance marks his words in the union of the believing wife with a heathen husband. There was held at this

time in Jerusalem a festival for the reception of the new vessels for the temple. Ezra was made chief judge over the community, and by decree of king "set magistrates and judges which may judge all the people that are beyond the river, all such as know the laws of thy God, and teach ye them that know them not. And whosoever will not do the law of thy God and the law of the king, let judgment be enacted speedily upon him, *whether it be unto death, or to banishment, or to confiscation of goods, or to imprisonment.*"

Every power was put in Ezra's hands. Events had moved smoothly from the very day he was established as governor.

Three months had passed, but on the sixteenth day of



EZRA ADDRESSING THE PEOPLE.

the ninth month the calm came to a sudden close. At this time, copies of the law which he had brought with him were distributed. When the readers discovered that he prohibited mixed marriages, the shock was sad to all. Ezra was so surprised and wrought up over it that he tore his coat from top to bottom, pulled out his hair, and plucked out his beard. He then fell to the ground and lay as if struck dumb. Those who were of like mind clustered about him till the hour for the



evening sacrifice. When the people began to crowd the court for worship, he arose to his knees, stretched forth his hands, and prayed, while tears fell on his cheeks, beard and garments. His weeping and prayers affected the people. The crowds, out of sympathy—men, women and children—all wept. Shechaniah, a prominent citizen, stepped forward, saying: “Arise, for this matter belongeth unto thee; we also will be with thee; be of good courage and do it.” Ezra at once leaped to his feet, asking if they meant that they would help him. He then retired to one of the chambers of the temple, remaining there three days without food or water, till the will of the whole people became known.

Two things are to be looked at here; the deference paid by Ezra to public opinion, and the powerful impression he had made on the people. The assembly then appointed a commission to investigate the various cases of mixed marriage, with authority to compel religious husbands to part with heathen wives and vice versa. The first of the following year the list was complete. There were found to be fifty-four cases. This work of Ezra's has had great influence on the Jew to keep him separate from all the world. When Abraham drove out Hagar, who was foreign, his spirit was not that of Ezra: “It was very grievous in his sight . . . he rose up early in the morning and took bread and a waterskin, putting it on her shoulder and the child. . . . God heard the voice of the lad, and the angel of God called to Hagar out of heaven.”

We are next carried to the court of Persia, at the winter residence of the king. A young Jew, Nehemiah by name, attended the king as cup-bearer. His office brought him into so close relation with the king and queen that they frequently talked in a familiar manner to him. They now noticed he was very sorrowful, and they asked him why. He said that his brother had been up to Jerusalem on a pilgrimage and brought back the news that the city was in a bad state of repair. He was troubled about the place where his ancestors lay buried. It seemed to him that it was a dishonor to the Jewish people. For months the sorrow grew upon him, until one day the king said unto him: “For what dost thou make request?” Nehemiah then said unto the king: “If it please the king, and if thy servant have found favor in thy sight, I wish thou wouldst send me unto Judah, unto the city of my fathers’

sepulchre, that I may build it." The king and queen immediately granted the favorite's request. So Nehemiah was empowered by the king to go and carry on the work he desired. The importance was noted by friend and foe alike. He was a great exception to the royal governors of that day. He refused any salary. He was a wise man, telling no one the object of his mission. He desired to see for himself what the situation required.

After investigating everything he laid plans for fortifying the city and strengthening it in many other ways before his countrymen, apportioning the work to each. There was a splendid democracy in the work—poor and rich, high and low, worked alike side by side.



NEHEMIAH VIEWING THE WALLS OF JERUSALEM.

The enemies without used threats and laid traps to delay and stop the work. But Nehemiah was greater than all. There were traitors and false prophets that which he had to meet, as every man with a work must meet. He replied: "Should such a man as I flee?" In moments of danger he made the spirits of his countrymen brave, saying: "Be ye not afraid of them; remember the Lord, which is great and terrible, and fight for your brethren, your sons and your daughters, your wives and your houses." In addition to the aid given him by his countrymen, a band of Persians on whom he could absolutely rely,

assisted him. They had accompanied him from Susa. Josephus says: "Though Nehemiah lived to a good old age, and performed many other noble acts, yet the eternal monument of himself which he left behind him was the circuit of the walls of Jerusalem." When the walls were completed, two great processions walked about them, stopping at the historic points as soldiers who go over a battlefield. The leaders, Ezra and Nehemiah, led the great procession. Together they put the nation on a high moral and spiritual plane. Statesmen, engineers, rulers, they withstood the nobles who oppressed the poor, closed the gates against Sabbath traffic, and filled the nation with a hope which carried it onward.



## CHAPTER L

### JOB, THE SPIRITUAL HERO

WE have now reached the Book of Job—a book wherein the problems of life are so deeply discussed that every succeeding age has stopped to consider them. It opens in the following manner: “There was a man in the land of Uz whose name was Job; and that man was perfect and upright, and feared God and eschewed evil.”

The Revised Version of Scripture makes the book easy to be understood. The Old Version is beautiful in style, but the New better



THE NILE AT LOW WATER. PYRAMIDS  
IN THE DISTANCE.

explains the meaning of the text. A little of it is still beyond our understanding, because reference is made to things which have passed away, yet throughout, it

is a book of sublime thought. It is not known *when* or *where* it was written. Some have laid the place of its writing beneath the Pyramids of Egypt; others, in the home of Laban; others, under the tents of Jethro; others, in the palace of Solomon; others, in the home of a lonely exile. All these places, and more, have been named, but no man knows *where it was written*.

No man knows, either, the nationality of the author, but because he uses the sacred name of Jehovah, some believe him to have been a Hebrew. But as Jethro knew God by that name even before Moses did, this would explode the idea that the author was necessarily a Hebrew.

The language of the book would indicate that it was written

during the age of the patriarchs. The hero talks as one who lived in the days of Abraham. But we have no clue to time, for he mentions no law, no history, no leaders, and no institutions which stand out to mark either a year or a century.

The scenery of the book reaches back beyond the records of vast empires and beyond the confines of the Holy Land. The author writes as though living among men who believe in the One True God, but he does not distinguish men as Jews or Gentiles. He deals in the glories of no nations' histories, though they seem to pass before him in a vast panorama. His words breathe of the open desert, of an early world, yet sometimes, something seems to imply a later day; but nothing can be decided upon with surety. Though familiar with the eagle, the ox, the goat, the lion, the wild ass, the monsters of the deep, the vast systems of the stars, the author has made them to appear as though on the plains. All in the book is strange, yet we find ourselves at home with these men. Their problems are ours; their difficulties and temptations have been or are ours in life. They yield to the same faith that we do and their God is our God. Can it be that the Book of Job is the spiritual biography of mankind? I believe it is.

Considering it in this light, we should understand that the popular idea of Job's character is misleading. When people talk of the patience of Job, I wonder if they understand what they say. To be sure, he bore his losses with resignation, but did he not also question why he

should suffer? Was he not often indignant and restless?

It seems to me he was, after all, not as patient and submissive as we sometimes make him out to be. True, he was a great man, and as such he was tender—nay, sometimes resigned—but gen-



OBELISK, RAMESES II., LUXOR, EGYPT.

erally despairing. The beautiful part of it all is, *he found peace at last*. By examining your Bible you will notice that the Book of Job is the very last of the historical books of the Bible and that it just precedes the Psalms. The different speakers are introduced in prose, but the



SHEEP IN PASTURE.

body of the book is written in poetry and forms a continuous story from beginning to end.

The poetry differs from ours. It is written in the Hebrew form. The main characteristic of Hebrew poetry is the parallelism. Two lines are thrown together, each expressing the same thought. As, for example:

“ There the wicked cease from troubling,  
And the weary be at rest.”

The Book of Job is, therefore, a poem in Hebrew form. The name to be applied to this poetry is a question which has excited much



discussion. Whether it is an epic or a drama is a question. It is not like the Psalms, which are hymns, and refer to personal possessions; neither is it like the mystic Songs of Solomon, except in wisdom, nor like Ecclesiastes, which is a combination of prose and poetry. It differs from every book in the Bible, though it is like some. Job is the center of interest from the beginning to the end. Around him are grouped other characters, and from the lips of these the poem issues.

The story is of Job—a Gentile. He does not entrench against a city; he goes over no land or sea. He builds no nation; but he records his adventures experienced on the refuse heap which lay outside the village limits.

If the poem is an epic, it is the epic of the inner life—a story of the trials and the triumphs *over one's own self*. Some speak of it as a "sacred drama." Like a drama, it has a dialogue; but unlike a drama, it has no change of scene, no movement, except the movement of thought, which is internal and spiritual. This movement is not conveyed in the poem itself—the drama so-called—but in the opening and closing of the book, which lie outside the poem. It is a lonely book in the world's literature. It has no companion greatness anywhere in any language.

God permitted it to come down to us, not because of the story itself, but to set forth certain facts, which facts must help to establish a sound philosophy of religion.

The first scene is laid in heaven. God's sons come before him. Among them was Satan, who is called the Adversary. God asked the Adversary from whence he came, and he answered: "From going to and fro in the earth, and from walking up and down in it."

Now, the Lord was pleased with Job—very much pleased with him—so he asked the Adversary if he had seen Job? There was good ground for God's pride in Job. Besides being a noble man and devoted to his family, he was very rich. His riches, among other things, consisted of seven thousand sheep, five hundred yoke of oxen, and great fields of grain, grass, fruits, nuts, and olives. He had a wife, seven sons and three daughters. His sons had grown up and built homes of their own. On various occasions they made feasts for their friends. The sisters, with the parents, often attended them. After these feasts, Job used to rise early in the morning and offer a sacrifice to God, lest



"THERE CAME A MESSENGER UNTO JOB."

even unwittingly or secretly wrong had been thought. "Thus did Job continually." He was also good to everybody, and especially to the widow and the orphan. He was kind to his help, never oppressing them. He was ever the friend of man, woman, and child—"upright and perfect"—therefore, God was proud of him.

But Satan said: "Is Job good? He can well afford to be good. He has everything in the world. Bring trouble upon him and he will curse thee to thy face." God, so the sacred story runs, was so sure of Job that he told Satan he might do anything he liked with Job, only he must not take away his life. The question with Satan was, would Job curse God, or would he remain true to Him.

Now note what happened. All, or nearly all, the calamity happened in one day. Job's children were feasting in the oldest son's house, when a messenger rushed in breathless and said: "The oxen were plowing and the asses feeding beside them; and the Sabeans fell upon them and took them away. They slew the servants also, and I alone am left of the servants." He was still speaking, when another messenger came, and said: "Lightning leaped out of heaven and has consumed the sheep and killed the servants, and I am the only survivor." Scarcely had the second completed his story when a third rushed in, saying that the Caldeans had come in three bands, rushed the camels off, put the keepers to the sword, and left only one man standing. A fourth messenger came from the home of the oldest son, where a feast was in progress. He said that the feast was at its height when a storm arose. The house fell, and the children and servants were buried amid the ruins.

What think you Job said? He tore his mantle as a sign of mourning, and fell to the ground, but all the time worshiping God, saying: "The Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away. Blessed be the name of the Lord." This ends the first part of the story.

The second part opens as the first. The scene is supposed to be in heaven. God's sons again presented themselves before Him. After some conversation God asked the Adversary if he did not consider Job the greatest man in the world, for in spite of all that he had done to him, God said, "still he holdeth fast his integrity, although thou movedst me against him to destroy him without cause."

The Adversary said in reply: "All that a man hath will he give



for his life. But put forth thine hand now and touch his bone and his flesh and he will curse thee to thy face."

God told the Adversary that he could further test Job. He had lost his children and his fortune. Now Satan desired that he be afflicted with leprosy;

so at his request this dread disease came upon him, so bad that he could not live in his own dwelling. He was cut off from people and home and obliged to remain outside the village. Then it was that his wife broke down and lost her faith. She advised Job to turn from God. She herself had abandoned God because she thought the Lord had forsaken her husband. Job told her that she talked like an unwise woman. "Shall we receive good at the hands of God, and shall we not receive



JOB IN HIS DEEP AFFLICTION.

evil? In all this did not Job sin with his lips." About this time Job had three intimate friends—Eliphaz, Bildad, and Zophar—who came to see him. They found him so changed that they sat down silent beside him.

When Job spoke he cursed the day that he was born. Then they all began to talk about the problems which afflicted and agitated the minds of men. They asserted that Job had committed some secret sin, and this was the reason why God was punishing him.

Job was indignant, and said that he was willing to have every woman

and man he had come in contact with, to testify concerning his conduct. Nay, he himself appealed to God, saying that he had not even in his heart sinned against man or woman. Job, reasoning from this standpoint, said that every happy person was good; every one who did not suffer was honored of God. If that were true, then the reverse was true, that every one who suffered was bad, and every unhappy one was not a child of God. He said that statements of such a character were false.

He then went to the other extreme. He said, everything was going to destruction; the good alone suffered; the evil and evil men flourished like luxuriant and tropical weeds. This was almost as bad a doctrine as the one he had refuted. It needs only to be stated to see how full of error it was. Virtue is always successful. Wrong never wins, though it may seem to do so. When Job looked out on the world of nature, he saw how great it was, how beautiful, how mysterious; so when they charged him with opposing God, he said they gave him the name of doing what he would never have the folly of doing. No one was able to oppose God. When they had talked a long time on the subject of human suffering, another friend of Job's came—Elihu. He was a beautiful young fellow. He was modest and did not say much at first, but in the end he said considerable.

When Job justified himself as righteous, his three friends ceased talking because they felt that they could not help a man who felt he was all right. It is the folly of follies to rank all men as wicked because they suffer, and God reckoned with these men because they tried to make Job out a bad man. Elihu was at first very wroth with Job because Job justified himself; but as he talked that feeling faded away. His words grew comforting. He did not believe that Job had been punished for a secret sin, yet he said there was a discipline in sorrow which God permitted for the good of all. He talked on soothingly and largely, but even *he* did not touch the heart of the drama, because no man knew the secret. The story was divinely *invented*, to show that a man could be true to God, though everything evil came upon him. When the four ceased talking, God came to Job. He questioned him who had suffered so much, yet he said nothing of his sufferings. He did not even lift the veil from the gate that he might see things as they were.



JOB PRAYED FOR THEM.

The friends did not know the nature of Job's malady. God did. God knew he could not control himself like a well man, yet God rebukes Job for his presumption. God then healed

him. *Then he talked like a well man.* It is hard for the sick to see things in the right way. God, having made him well, asked him if his own trouble was the *only mystery in the world*. Could he enter the throne room of the universe, and guide the universe? Was it best to say that the universe was a mass of disorder because he could not read the secret of his own suffering? Was it not best to trust God as a friend who called the universe into being long even before Job was born? God who ruled the universe could rule Job's case too. God never told Job the secret of the suffering, but Job was *fully reconciled to God when he said*: "I have uttered things too wonderful for me." "Before I knew Thee *afar off*. Now I know Thee my God *near at hand*."



The author concludes the story in prose. His friends are censured. God does not like the hardness of their sayings. He forgave Job, the impatient, feverish, arrogant, audacious, faith-clouded man; forgave every fault because in it all he declared and maintained with unconquerable tenacity that *mercy and righteousness were dear to God*. Job stands as a type of the world's sorrow. Some are not restored to joy in the way Job was, but they can find a path in which God can walk with them. "The Lord is very pitiful and of tender mercy." This book does not answer the question, "Why do men suffer?" Yet it assures us of this, that God loves the righteous and puts the universe, all of it, at the feet of his loved ones.

God turned to the three men who had assumed to represent Him and said that they must offer a sacrifice for their sin against Him and against His servant Job. Their way of escape, He said, was through Job's prayer. Job prayed for them, and while praying for his enemies he himself was restored. "And he turned and gave Job twice as much as he had before."

All his friends came up to his home to comfort him, to leave money for him, and gold. He now had 2,200 head of stock-sheep, camels and oxen. And God blessed him with ten children; seven boys and three girls. Evidently they were splendid children. "And in all the land were no women found so fair as the daughters of Job, and their father gave them inheritance among their brethren." That is to say, the girls in Job's family had as much property as the boys, which was right. Thus the story ends happily and sweetly, and the light of God fell on the old homestead at evening, as it did in days of yore.

## CHAPTER LI

### MALACHI · OR THE CLOSING OF THE OLD TESTAMENT PROPHECY

I WONDER if we have ever fully realized that endings are beginnings? That is to say, that no great thing can begin till some great thing ends. The close of the Old Testament marks the beginning of the New Testament. The one had to end in order that the other might begin; yet centuries intervene between the two events. In the scripture we have a phrase which we ought to take notice of—“*the fulness of time.*” To understand this phrase we have but to compare it to a bud filled to bursting. If we can grasp the idea of time, and the



“THE GATES OF THE CITY ARE  
OPEN IN EVERY DIRECTION.”

things in time, as being filled out like a flower, we will get God's idea of "the fulness of time." In the Book of Malachi are recorded the last of the Old Testament prophecies. These prophecies become also forerunners for the New Testament. We know nothing of the author of this book but his name; yet the contents lead scholars to feel that he was active during the second visit of Nehemiah to Jerusalem. That would place his writings about 400 B.C. About the time of Malachi a great man by the name of Confucius was born in China. His teachings produced such an effect on the nation that to this day they retain his philosophy, yet the Chinese nation are a proof that Confucius' philosophy is not great enough to keep men in a state of progress. In the fourth century also, B.C., Buddha—a man compared by his followers to Jesus—lived in India. He was a nobleman—a prince who forsook his father's court to preach what he deemed to be the greatest thing in the world—the truth as he saw it. He, too, has many followers.

Let us now imagine that we are back in the time of Malachi and that it is the Sabbath day and that we are seated on the walls of Jerusalem. We notice that the gates of the city are open in every direction; that the people are coming and going just as they do on a week day in any great city. As we look we can see great strings of camels and mules coming, loaded with every conceivable thing. In looking over to our right, we see rows of little shops called bazaars, and the people all bent upon trading, as if their life depended upon what they accomplished. Let us now go up to the temple. Here we see very little indication of life. The people seem to have grown tired of supporting the worship. There is no singing, no life; the temple is almost empty! Malachi's face is very sad. Let us now in imagination go to the English court room, which not long ago was crowded by people waiting to hear a famous suit. We see the judge, a fine looking old man, sitting in a black gown. His voice is weak and can hardly be heard, yet how the men and women bend forward to listen! They do not think of the voice, they are trying to catch every word he has to say, and why are they so anxious?—simply because millions of dollars are hanging on his decision. It is money, money. The story is not new; it is old. You see interest in anything depends upon the heart. Jerusalem at this time was more interested in the loads on the camels'



backs than in God's message in the temple. Religion was breaking down, and, among other things, the mixed marriages were assuming bad form. Many of the Jews were leaving their families and marrying foreign women. Malachi's soul was moved within him as he looked on deserted homes and forgotten children.

This book by its very name—Messenger—leads people to think of angels, both good and bad. Long ago the spirit of a bad angel went forth and tempted David to number the people, contrary to God's wish. This spirit was not bad in the sense of malignant, but shall we say its influence bred pride in the king, eventually causing him to fall? In the Book of Job we have the Adversary, who, though not malignant, scoffed at



MALACHI CRITICISING THE PEOPLE'S OFFERINGS TO THE LORD.

virtue. He said that religion would surely fail when sufficiently tempted. Malachi turned to the temple and, looking at the mean and niggardly offering which the people were making to God, reminded them that their offerings were not needed by the Lord. He pointed to the sun which spanned the heavens, and, in imagination, looked on every nation, and said that God is great, no matter under what name he is known. Jesus emphasized and glorified this doctrine

by saying: "Many shall come from the East and the West, and sit down in the Kingdom." And St. Paul said: "In every nation, he that feareth Him and worketh righteousness is accepted of Him." "And not the *hearers* of the law, but the *doers* of the law, who have not the law, shall be justified."

Singularly enough, the Jews thought that the name of Jehovah, "The Ineffable Name," was too holy a name to speak, so they substituted another name for Jehovah; but in Moses' day it would have been considered wrong not to have spoken the name of Jehovah. One ground upon which the Jews advocated silence was the perversion of the meaning of the words, "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain." So they ran to the extreme—which is a common error among men; they substituted Adonai—"Lord,"—for Jehovah. In one sense this reverence was well. Reverence for His name consecrates us to all that is good and holy. The Book of Malachi, like the Book of Ecclesiastes, is a *tonic for self-control*. "Be not rash with thy mouth, and let not thine heart be hasty to utter a word before God; for God is in heaven and thou upon earth; therefore let thy words be few." This reserve is well for nations which find comfort in the mere crying out of The Name. Some far Eastern devotees actually place their prayers on a wheel and whirl them around, thinking that the number of revolutions constitutes their merit before heaven. The name Jehovah is special to the Israelites; Elohim is the name by which God is known to all "nations under heaven." Jesus made God's name sweeter and nearer by calling Him "Father." You will notice in this unity of worship an approach to the "fulness of time."

Before leaving this subject I desire to briefly speak of the religion of the Persians and its effect upon the Israelites. God early put the children of Israel to school in Egypt. Some people deny the fact that Egypt influenced Israel. That is foolish and wrong; for in spite of errors on the part of the Egyptians the Lord deliberately chose that country as a school for his chosen people. So also, the Persian religion and customs affected Israel. Zoroaster, who lived about 2,000 years before Christ, introduced an independent doctrine and Israel was influenced by it. It taught the one true God which Zoroaster had strongly impressed upon his disciples once as they stood on an eminence overlooking his capital. He told them to choose then from among all the

gods, One True God. He was willing, if it was helpful to them, that they should have a flame represent the Deity, but he desired them to choose between God and gods. Tradition, too, states that when Ezra kindled the flame on the altar at Jerusalem, he did so with the oil which the Persians used, obtained from the burning springs on the shore of the Caspian Sea. He called the flame "Naphthar," which



DAMASCUS GATE, JERUSALEM.

has become our word "naphtha" or kerosene. Thus the two nations acted and reacted upon each other. God sent the Persians as "shepherds" to Israel.

Let us now look at the closing scene in the Book of Malachi—here is introduced a prophecy after which the curtain drops till the time of Christ. In the early days, Israel had hoped for a king around whose person the nation might rally. But that hope had now passed into another hope. A spiritual form began to shape itself before Israel—a figure of a Messenger. Malachi is supposed by the best of scholars



not to be the prophet's original name, but one taken from the great idea of the book—My Angel. This idea pervades the book, and it is supposed that the prophet lost his name in his theme. Malachi did not look for a Majestic King, but a Messenger from heaven—an ambassador from heaven who would enforce “the covenant” or, as we would say, carry out the treaty between God and his people. He looked upon this coming as a supreme moment. He said that then the worthless and unessential things would be separated from the essential and necessary, that all things would be cleansed in a manner similar to the refining of metals by fire, and that every one needed to prepare for the coming of that day; a day in which the heart of the father would be turned to the son and the heart of the son to the father. Following the book of Malachi come three unbroken centuries. During this time a group of thinkers arose in Greece, whose philosophy and literature affected the world more than that introduced by either Confucius or Buddha. The founder of this philosophy was Socrates, who, from his youth up, never ceased to listen to the voice within him, which he claimed was not conscience but a guiding spirit. What he gave the world was good, but, after all, he was not the man who made the world live. A greater than Socrates had to come. In a lowly “khan” by Bethlehem's downs, ere long, a babe—Jesus—was born—the Son of Mary. John the Baptist pointed all men to Him as “The Lamb of God which taketh away the sin of the world.”

## CHAPTER LII

### ALEXANDER THE GREAT; OR, DANIEL'S VISION OF THE GRECIAN EMPIRE

WHEN we ended the book of Malachi we finished the books of the Bible. Yet the prophecy of the scriptures includes what we shall now write about "Alexander the Great." We shall not talk about him as a mere conqueror or a soldier. We shall write of his life as it served the purpose of religion.

Let us turn to the Book of Daniel for a revelation of this thought. Daniel says: "And as I was considering, behold an he goat came from the west on the face of the whole earth and touched not the ground; and the goat had a notable horn between his eyes."—Daniel 8:5.



THE EDUCATION OF ALEXANDER.

The mountain goat represented Alexander the Great. The goat bounded so swiftly over the face of the earth that he did not touch the ground. He had one beautiful horn between the eyes, like a unicorn. In the fury of his power, he ran against the double headed ram. The ram represented the King of Media and Persia. "And there was no power in the ram to stand before him, but he cast him down to the ground and stamped upon him; and there was none that could deliver the ram out of his hand."—Daniel 8:7.

At the age of twenty-two Alexander crossed the Hellespont. The rapidity and brilliancy of his movements astonished Asia and the world.

Swift as he was, he was no less thorough. The Greek language and civilization took root wherever he held sway. This was the real task which God had assigned him. Alexander might think of conquest only, but God designed him to do a greater work. When we see railroad tracks or telegraph wires we know that trains will pass over one and messages over the other.

If the people of Alexander's day had been more wise they would have seen that Alexander's path and conquests were for trains of events and for messages to the world. The world was being made one by language. It was being welded together by the ideas of a great civilization. The great reason for all this movement did not appear to thoughtless men and victorious soldiers.

Ten years after Alexander had crossed the Hellespont, he entered old Babylon. From that great city he looked on the nations he had conquered, and planned to make them one. He wished to revive them by a new civilization, and to bind them by a single language. Checking his early rapid career, he gave the nations opportunity to appear before him and pay homage to him in Babylon.

They came even from the ends of the earth, to offer obedience or to claim protection.

It is a pity that there was no great prophet to set Alexander's life before us, as was the case in the life of other kings; still he came into contact with religious history in such a way that we have a pretty good view of him in the writings of religious historians.

Whilst Alexander was in Babylon he was visited by an ambassador from Rome. Alexander, the greatest man in the world, met a distinguished citizen of another country which was to take up his ideas, to



carry out his work, to found a greater and more enduring empire. It was the meeting of men, filled with great purposes, who carried forward the ideas of ages.

It is worth our while to stop and think that the greatest representatives of power were in the city where the first monument to human pride had been erected—the Tower of Babel. In that city God's judgment had rested heaviest, because that empire had represented greatness apart from goodness; where goodness was really opposed by greatness.

It is worth our while to think over this scene—Alexander the Great and the ambassador from Rome meeting together in the greatest seat of ancient glory. Each serving a divine purpose, yet each passing away, man and nation, as they deviated from the divine goodness and the divine plan.



RUINS OF CRUSADERS' CASTLE ON THE HEIGHTS OF MIZPAH.

We have another scene in Alexander's life which brings him before us near and in the city of Jerusalem.

In the year 333 B.C., Alexander came to a place where he had a great view of the Jordan Valley. By his side stood Parmenis, his friend. Whilst he was looking from the heights of Mizpah a long procession came toward him and the people were arrayed in white. The priests came in white robes; the High Priest in purple and gold attire, wear-

ing a turban graced with a golden plate on which the name of Jehovah was inscribed. As this procession neared him, Alexander turned to his guides, saying: "Who are these?" The guides, who were enemies to the Jews, replied: "They are the rebels who deny your authority."

It was the hour of sunrise on a winter morning. The procession in two ranks had marched all night, the priests clanging the cymbals for marching music.

The chiefs around him were deeply astonished when Alexander, stepping down from his chariot, bowed down to the ground before the High Priest.

No one dared to say aught to him except Parmenis, his friend, who remarked to the king: "Why should he whom all men worship, worship the High Priest of the Jews?" "Not him," replied Alexander, "but the God whose High Priest he is, I worship. Long ago when at Durim in Macedonia, I saw in my dreams such an one in such an attire as this, who urged me to undertake the conquest of Persia. It is the same figure which has appeared to me in the eve of each of my victories."

Hand in hand with the High Priest, accompanied by the priests running joyfully at his side, Alexander entered Jerusalem and offered a sacrifice.

He saw with pleasure the prophecy which indicated the rise of the Grecian empire. He confirmed and widened the privileges of the Jews, adding such as made them more prosperous, inviting those who were so disposed to join his army.

This story may be mixed with some additions, yet it is an undoubted fact that Alexander visited Jerusalem: that he worshiped in the Temple as he had done in other places. No additions, no fables could add to the real significance of the meeting of Greek and Hebrew civilization. The fact was more clear than any fable which attempted to embellish it. It was not unworthy of romance, for it united the literature of two great peoples.

It is believed that the august mind of Aristotle, the Greek scholar, was quickened by the wisdom of Solomon, a copy of which had been given to him by Alexander.

The two civilizations furnished each other with a needed strength. Each supplied what the other lacked.

The ancients considered Alexander to be, not only a *conqueror*, but a *prophet*.

He was the first of the Greeks to conceive the idea of the Universal Fatherhood of God. He was greater in this than his famous teacher Aristotle. He said: "*God is the common Father of all men, especially of the best men.*" We must think of Alexander in this respect if we are to get his higher side. It was this which led him to contemplate the world under one language, one civilization and, no doubt, one thought of God.

In keeping with this idea he built a city, the city of Alexandria in Egypt. The city became the blending point of three continents: Europe, Asia and Africa.

Here Greek philosophy and Hebrew religion met, never more to part. This was a fact of profound importance to the world, an influence which has never since passed away.

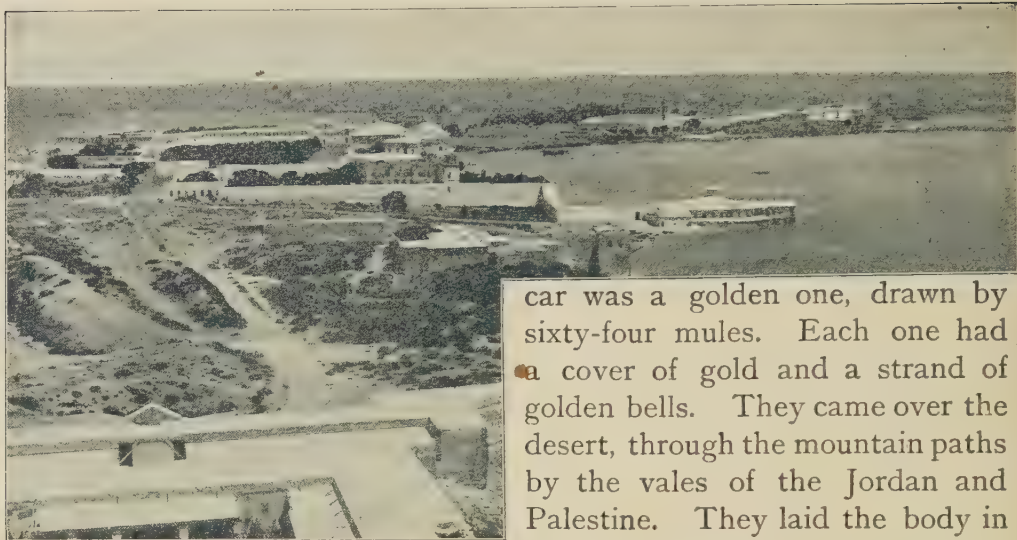
Alexander saw the place when it was a mere fishing village and observed what could be made of it. The eastern portion of the Mediterranean Sea had always lacked a safe harbor. A low, level reef extended from the island of Pharos toward the land. He connected this with the mainland by a mole. This gave a shelter for ships in that portion of the sea, which had never been known before. His military cloak served as a plan for the city. But the streets, running at right angles, were a reproduction of the broad avenues of Babylon.

In the midst of many plans, his life suddenly ended. A splendid funeral procession bore his body from Chaldea to Alexandria. The



TEMPLE OF THE SUN AT TYRE.





PANORAMA OF ALEXANDRIA.

car was a golden one, drawn by sixty-four mules. Each one had a cover of gold and a strand of golden bells. They came over the desert, through the mountain paths by the vales of the Jordan and Palestine. They laid the body in the tomb in the city of Alexandria.

That tomb has dwindled away. It is now a miserable chapel, guarded by an aged keeper, and the place is called: "The grave of Iskander of the Two Horns. Founder of Alexandria."

The sudden death and the broken plans are all in accord with Scripture prophecy: "The horn was broken." And "the four horns" or kings sprang up in his place. But the city of Alexandria grew into a great Greek city, full of commerce, culture and learning.

Many Jews lived there, attracted by the opportunities of the place and by the special privileges granted to them by Alexander. They became wealthy merchants and great scholars. They received that impetus in trade and finance which has never passed away from that gifted race. At that moment Greek literature, language and civilization governed the world; an important step in the religious education of the race. This was absolutely necessary to the world's progress.

The Greek impulse, which pervaded the world; the large and wealthy body of Jewish citizens in the kingdom of Egypt, led Ptolemy Philadelphus, king of Egypt, to desire a translation of the Hebrew Scriptures into the Greek language. He wished a translation not for the Jews merely, but for his great library in Alexandria and for the world. He felt that it would be a literary pleasure and an event worthy of his reign.

He became the imitator and patron of this monumental work. It has made his name immortal.

In order to obtain the favorable action of the High Priest in Jerusalem, Ptolemy sent him many costly and beautiful presents. The High Priest, lending favorable ear to the king's proposals, selected seventy-two scholars for the work.

The meeting place of the scholars was on the Pharian island, where the lighthouse is situated. In that sea-girt place, free from the hurry of the city, they pursued their work. This spot enabled them to perform religious ablutions in the salt sea, morning by morning. Long years after, the rooms they occupied were shown to those who were interested in the scholar's work. On the completion of the great task, it was regarded by some as the greatest calamity that could befall the race. They deemed it to be a falling away from God—a tampering with holy things. Every translation of scripture has met with serious opposition. We may liken the Bible to a great palace. The windows grow dusty, and the cobwebs cling to the walls. The dust and cobwebs must be swept away. Then it is that we get new ideas of the birth, and see better what the original means. This resetting makes new doorways, puts in new windows. But all this is done in love and



ANCIENT ROMAN TEMPLE IN ARABIAN CEMETERY AT ALEXANDRIA.



RUTH AND NAOMI.



reverence, that we may see the word of God in the greater light and nearer the original scripture.

There was a large and influential class, however, who received the Septuagint or Greek version with great favor. It was hailed as an event in religion and scholarship. That version was equal in authority with the Hebrew scriptures themselves. By this translation, the Hebrew Bible became known both to the Greek and Roman world, and was

placed in the hands of all the great races. Ptolemy Philadelphus did not grasp the full meaning of



THE VALLEY OF THE JORDAN.

this translation, but God did. He planned higher than men planned. The two plans were in one. The Septuagint version was the Bible which the Apostles, Disciples and Evangelists used in the first age of the Christian church. This version is used in the Greek churches to-day and is the basis of the Latin Bible.

On the rocky islet of the Alexandrian harbor stands a lighthouse, called the Pharos lighthouse, which is world-renowned. It is the mother of lights which on shore, island, reef and headland, have guided the wearied mariner from sea to sea and shore to shore. But more splendid than that lighthouse has been *this spiritual lighthouse*, the Greek version of scripture, which has lighted the minds and spirits of all the ages since then.

We have said that, when we look at the steel rail, we know a train is to run over it, and when we look at the telegraph wire we know that a message will flash over it. We know why they are there and to *what* use they are put. If we will, we can see just as plainly that the life of Alexander the Great, his deeds, his influence and effect became a road over which a larger and diviner work must eventually go, and indeed they formed lines over which the messages of ages have flashed.

If we have looked too much at the material side of Alexander's life, let us remember that there was a higher thought in his mind than that of mere conquest. Certainly it was not conquest which led God to give Alexander a place in prophecy. No man could have a great teacher like Aristotle without being moved to the best things. Alexander was not wholly dead to higher opportunity, as some think. His world-work was not conquest. That failed. His enduring work was the spread of language and civilization.



THE MOSQUE OF GABARI, AT ALEXANDRIA.

His kind relation to the Jew, born on the day he perceived his own relation to prophecy, gave us the great work of Ptolemy Philadelphus. Thus we have the golden chain of related life and related events. The eternal plan is ever working out in the desires, tastes, and ambitions of men. It is pleasant and wonderful to think that in every event God is working out a tender plan of education and love for His children. It shows the universal work of the Divine Mind in the life of man. "Love is the care of education; love is the keeping of wisdom. *The just man maketh his boast, God is his father and that he is the son of God.* O Lord, thou lover of souls, thine incorruptible spirit filleth all things.

Thy providence, O Father, governeth the world: the holy spirit of education. Wisdom floweth from Thee, the lightness of the everlasting light: she maketh all things new, and in all ages entering into holy souls, she maketh them friends of God and prophets."—*Extracts from Solomon's Book of Wisdom.*

Let us, then, not remember the name of Alexander as a mere conqueror, but show him as he was, deep within his soul. Above his wars he had a great idea. He was God's instrument in a great work. From Alexander to Jesus was three hundred years. Yet God was preparing for that far-off event by the things we have been talking about.

If we lean on God, we shall see history and science far in advance of others. It is this which distinguishes men and makes them really great. No man, no people, have ever been great without a vision. Greatness perishes when the vision of God passes away. Whatever endured in Alexander's work was due to the little or great view he had of what God wished him to do. Everything failed in his life that was merely the lust of conquest. Everything succeeded which embraced some of the moral and spiritual plan of God.



DAMASCUS OF TO-DAY.





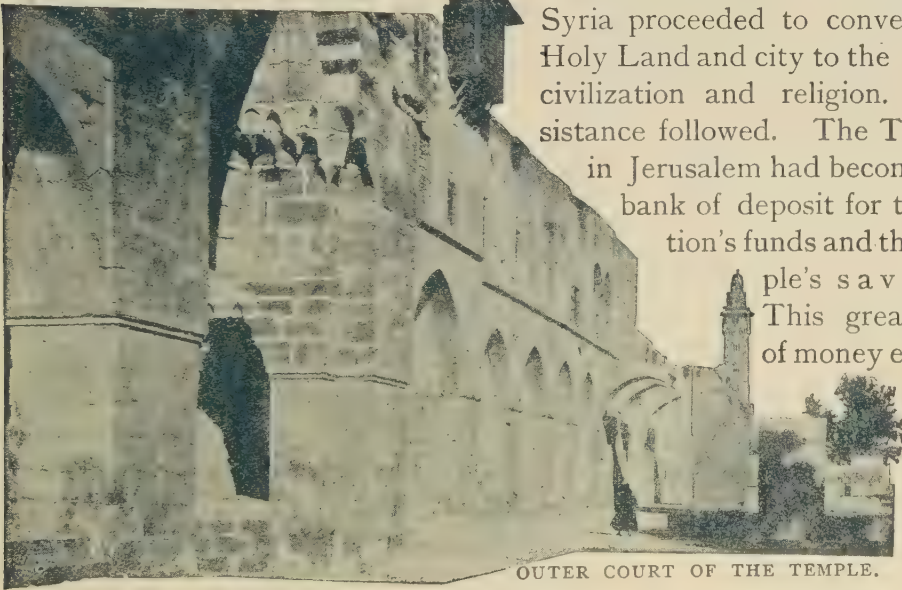
THE QUAY, ALEXANDRIA, EGYPT.

## CHAPTER LIII

### THE MACCABEES ; OR THE WAR OF INDEPENDENCE

THE plan of Alexander to make the world one in language and one in institutions left a deep impression on the minds of his successors. This was especially with that portion of his kingdom which embraced Syria. There was strife between the Greek kings of Egypt and Syria over the possession of Palestine, but because it was nearer to Syria, it naturally fell under her sway. In accordance with Alexander's idea, but not in accordance

with his method, the kings of Syria proceeded to convert the Holy Land and city to the Greek civilization and religion. Resistance followed. The Temple in Jerusalem had become the bank of deposit for the nation's funds and the people's savings. This great sum of money excited



OUTER COURT OF THE TEMPLE.

the evil desires of foreign governors, who plundered the Temple. The worst features of oppression began in the year 175 B.C., in the reign of Antiochus Epiphanes or Antiochus IV., who was a strange creature : a blending of genius and insanity. He was called "The Brilliant" and "The Madman," and fairly earned his titles. Kind and cruel, lawful and lawless, no one knew how to read his character or what to expect.

As Alexander had been the creator of Alexandria, Antiochus was really the creator of Antioch, the brilliant rival of the Egyptian city.

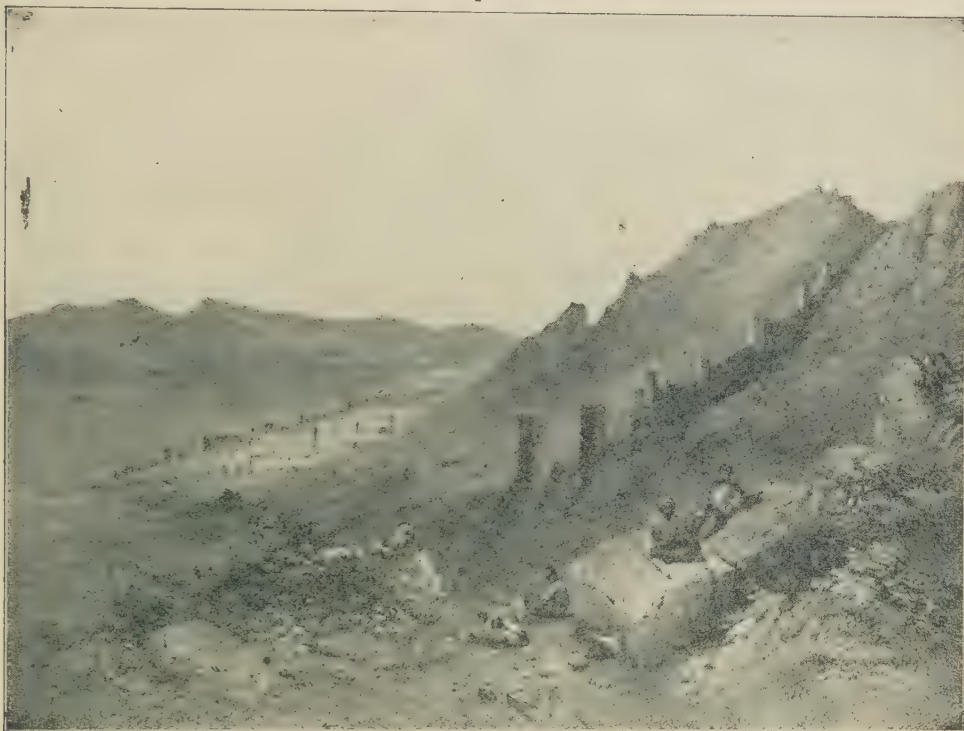
It was located in the northern part of Syria, on the banks of the Orontes River as it turns toward the Mediterranean sea. This city will always be famous in the world because: "the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch." Acts 11:26. Alexandria might be said to represent the nobler side of Babylon, that is, its learning and its commerce, while Antioch represented its splendor, its luxury and vanities. So we shall find that the relation of the Jew to the Ptolemies in Egypt were gentle and beneficent. But their relation to the Seleucidæ in Antioch were antagonistic and offensive.

Antiochus made Antioch splendid. He had large plans of empire. He was a really great man, yet he walked in public processions arrayed as a clown and playing the buffoon. We may know from these traits of character that when he endeavored to bring his tributary states into one kingdom there would be mingled greatness and littleness, breeding disturbance. His fixed determination to bring them under the gods of Greece, among whom he deemed himself one, met with signal resistance at the hands of the Jewish patriots. The feelings of the nation received additional shock, because the Grecian games were established beneath the citadel of David. The Greeks ran naked in the Palæstra, wearing only a broad rimmed hat in imitation of the god Hermes, who presided over the athletic games. The fine sense of modesty which the Jewish youth had possessed passed away. In the presence of these things and by participation in them, the Jew became a feeble Greek. The vices of Antioch slowly spread over the nation. The king bent every energy to undermine faith and morals alike. After Antiochus had conquered Egypt, he seized Jerusalem. This was in keeping with his religious and political ambitions: that "all people should be one people and that every one should know his laws." Sending commissioners to Jerusalem to preside over forced conversions to his religious views, the city began to be Greek and pagan.

The feast of Dionysius was introduced; the festival was of the gayest description. Aged and revered citizens were forced to walk in the procession, wreathed with ivy. In some instances the ivy was branded on the naked flesh. But if he compelled the Jew to abandon God, the king set the example in turning from his own special deity, to worship a foreign god, thus fulfilling Daniel's words: "He regarded not the god of his fathers, he honored the god of forces, a god whom



his fathers knew not." Dan. 11:38. Since he sold the office of High Priest to the one bidding most, he again fulfilled Daniel's words: "And he shall divide the land for gain." Dan. 11:39. Forbidding the Jew to rest on the Sabbath and prohibiting the national rite for male children, he struck at the vital points of the national life. The



ANTIOCH.

crowning act of horror was the desecration of the Temple, on the 23rd day of November, 168 B.C., when the wall between the inner and outer court of the Temple was broken down. The 15th day of December in the same year witnessed the erection of a Grecian altar on the great platform of the altar of Zerubbabel. The gates had been burned; the grass was allowed to grow, so that the smooth Temple court was converted into a jungle. The crowning infamy came, when a herd of swine was introduced into the sacred precincts. The animals were slaughtered, the blood was sprinkled on the Altar the Holy of Holies and on the Books of the Law.

From this awful pollution the Israelites fled in horror. The Tem-

ple became a desert; the sacrifice ceased and the perpetual life went out. Daniel portrayed "the desolation of abomination" in the following words: "The sacrifice and the oblation shall cease and the overspreading of abominations shall make it desolate and shall be poured on the desolate." Dan. 9:27. "And from the time that the daily



THE FOUNTAIN OF EN-ROGEL.

sacrifice shall be taken away and the abomination that maketh desolate set up, there shall be a thousand two hundred and ninety days." Dan. 12:11. Some men and women suffered martyrdom rather than bend to the degrading rites forced on the mass of the people. A scribe, Eleazar by name, ninety years of age, like a Grecian athlete, wrapped as has been finely said in his dignity, piety and age, went boldly to his death: "I will show myself such an one as mine age requireth and leave a notable example to such as be young, to die willingly and courageously for the honorable and holy laws." 2 Maccabees 6:27, 28.

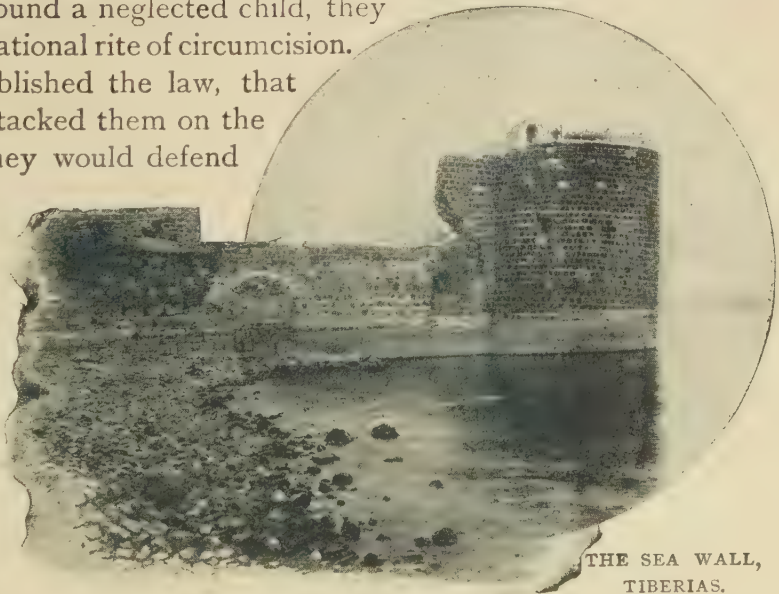
The nation was once more at a crisis. The deliverance came by no planning for it. Great things do not come usually in the way men

plan. It came by high necessity—by no co-operation, and seemingly without help from God. Yet God was in it all; human courage and perseverance were also there. Daniel in his vision saw monster nations rending each other to pieces, but he saw also a Deliverer: “A Son of Man.” Dan. 7:13. This phrase is comprehended in an explanation as meaning “the people of the saints,” together with the leaders. Dan. 7:27. Such a deliverance was near. A priestly family, by the name of Asmon, furnished the hero. The head of the family was Mattathias, who was advanced in years, but who had five stalwart sons. In the beginning of the persecution, the family had retired to their country home in Modin, or Modein, where the hills descended into the vale of Sharon. The incident which opened the war for independence was as follows: A heathen altar had been erected at Modin and the officer appointed to see that the people observed the law was at hand. Mattathias had indignantly refused to comply with the order of worship, and perceiving a countryman at the altar, slew him, together with the officer of state.

The die was cast, the war of independence was on. Raising the war cry of his nation, he with his whole family dashed into the mountains. Wherever they found a heathen altar, they pulled it down; wherever they found a neglected child, they performed the national rite of circumcision.

Mattathias established the law, that if the enemy attacked them on the Sabbath day, they would defend themselves.

Up to this time the Jews had refused to wage war on the holy day. The enemy, knowing this, had slaughtered them like sheep. But Mattathias



THE SEA WALL,  
TIBERIAS.



said he must change this: "If we are attacked we will defend ourselves, otherwise our enemies will root us out." But Mattathias was old; care, toil and hardship ended his life within a year. Calling his five sons about him, he gave the sacred cause into their hands. He placed Judas at the head of affairs, saying: "Mighty and strong from his youth up, let him be your captain and fight the battle of the people." He was a warrior indeed; his cheerfulness inspired them; his lion-like voice cheered them; his sword led them to victory. He was an ideal warrior, but his true knighthood consisted in this: that "he received all that were ready to perish." For six years he led his party. His work was almost superhuman. His successes varied, but he was always glorious. He could not challenge his enemies to one great, decisive battle on account of the smallness of his force. But that little band defeated the enemy in many engagements and his enthusiastic followers called him "Maccabi," or "Hammer," because he broke the ranks of the enemy. From this name his family became famous under the title of "The Maccabees."

The contest was religious, but not wholly national, because he had enemies among his own people. He was too broad for some, whilst others were willing to be subject to a foreign power and a false religion. His finest deed, and the one which has enthroned him in the world's affection, was the retaking of the Temple. He cleansed the sanctuary, rededicating it to the worship of God, and set the perpetual light in its place. The Temple was once more filled with the splendor of the ancient furnishing and service. At this moment he entered into correspondence with Rome, now beginning to fill the world's horizon. He thoroughly understood the power and character of Rome, the advantage and disadvantage coming to one who applied for an alliance as he did. Of her character he said: "None of them wears a crown or is clothed in purple to be magnified thereby. None are for a party; all are for the state. There is neither envy nor emulation among them." It was a great scene when the two ambassadors from Judas came into the august presence of the senate of Rome. A treaty of offense and defense was drawn up, written on two tablets of bronze. One of them was placed in the Tabularium beneath the capital; the other was borne to Judas. Before it reached him he had died on the field of battle. Some are inclined to think that he was sacrificed, among



A NATIVE WOMAN OF EMMAUS.

other reasons for this. It has raised an interesting historical query: Suppose he had lived?

His successes had thoroughly aroused the Syrian nation; the land was flooded with soldiers; Jerusalem was taken, and Judas slain 161 B.C. We read the end through an obscurity; something took place which we cannot grasp. He had difficulty in mustering his force. He went out just as happy that day as ever. He perceived the immense odds, but his voice rose high above

the din. Straight through the enemies' line he drove his force, and hard after it he went, but the other wing closed on him like a hinge. His bright sword gleamed all that day, but it was of no avail, and his trumpet sounded for the last time on that day. When he saw how he was enclosed, he said: "God forbid that I should do this thing and flee away from them. If our time has come, let us die manfully for our brethren and let us not leave

behind a stain on our honor." These were his last known words. His body was found among the heaps of dead. They buried him at Alodin as the dirge rose from the lips of his soldiers and people.

Termed a fanatic because he struggled for purity, his name and life stand out clear in history, as one who forgot the details of battle, of everyday life for the larger blessings of continuing his nation and her hopes. He died in the full hope that his nation would realize his ideal.

The Asmonean family did not give way to despair when Judas died. Jonathan, his brother, took his place. He, too, was a brilliant and sagacious man. Gathering his little force together, he retreated to the ravines and swamps of the lower Jordan, from which he carried on a most destructive guerrilla warfare. Demetrius, the nephew of Antiochus IV., now succeeded to the throne. A pretender arose, 152 B.C., claiming to be the son of Antiochus. The name of the pretender was Alexander Balas. Their rivalries were favorable to the cause of Jonathan. Each sought his influence, and Demetrius not only restored the hostages, but withdrew his forces from Judea. In consequence of this, Jonathan re-entered Jerusalem and the Temple without striking a blow.

In response to this, the pretender elected Jonathan, High Priest, adding to the dignity the title of "The King's Friend," presenting him, in addition, with a crown of gold and a purple robe. These acts were the ritual recognition of the independence of the insurgents. When Demetrius died, 150 B.C., Jonathan was master of all Judea, and was recognized as a powerful vassal of the Seleucidæ empire. Demetrius II. moved his forces against the pretender, but Jonathan defeated his force, accepting the challenge of the general to fight "where there was neither stone, nor pebble, nor place to flee unto." This victory gave him the shores of the Mediterranean Sea, with its most important ports. Though Demetrius was finally successful against the pretender, he chose to treat Jonathan as a powerful friend, to whom he granted further privileges.

The son of Alexander arose after the pretender's death to make a bid for the throne. Jonathan espoused his cause. But Alexander II. had a most ambitious minister, Tryphon, who assassinated both Jonathan and his master, 143 B.C. Jonathan was not heroic like Judas, nor as broad as the brother who succeeded him. He was a politician, not a



statesman. Still credit must be given to him for laying the foundation for complete independence. Simon, who succeeded him, was a man tried in wisdom and in action. He was strong, yet prudent. His manners were gentle, a strong nature held in full control. Judas had been the hero, Jonathan the diplomatist, but Simon was the statesman. Simon looked over the situation and, fully comprehending it, declared his nation free and independent. This was in the year 142 B.C.

With wise discernment he founded schools and they soon became



HOUSES OF EMMAUS.

the places of honor and influence, overshadowing the offering at the altar. He arranged the financial system of the nation, striking off a Jewish coinage in the year 139 B.C., but four years later was assassinated. Though coming to the headship of the nation when advanced in years, he combined a youthful vigor with a maturity of judgment, which won the esteem of nations and the affection of his people. He received a mark of unique respect from his nation. His virtues and his deeds were inscribed on a brazen tablet, which was fastened to the walls of

the Temple. This was a signal and illustrious honor. With Simon the Asmonean dynasty reached its glory. He was succeeded by his son, John Hyrcanus, who maintained all that his father had won. But after him the dynasty descended to its grave.

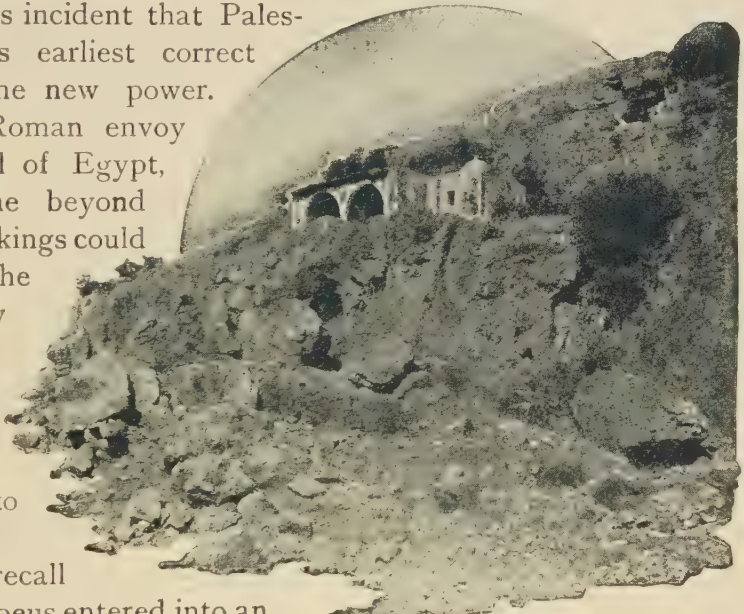
The fruits of the struggle were marked both religiously and politically. The people were gentler and broader. There was a growing faith in man's immortality and resurrection. The struggle of the nation was the rending of conditions, which, like the bursting acorn, permit the growth ordained of God. And Israel's battle for freedom brought a gentler thought and broader things into the world, which is always the plan of God.

## CHAPTER LIV

### HEROD THE GREAT; OR THE DEATH OF THE OLD TIME, THE BIRTH OF THE NEW TIME.

THIRTY years before the Maccabean struggle for Jewish independence, Hannibal, the great Carthaginian, came to Tyre, the birth-place of his race, for the purpose of arousing the East against Rome. He told the kings of the astonishing valor of the Roman legions and of his own early vow of eternal enmity against the Republic. It was, perhaps, from this incident that Palestine received its earliest correct knowledge of the new power. But when the Roman envoy stood on the soil of Egypt, marking the line beyond which the Syrian kings could not go, they felt the power and knew that the tracing in the sands was intended to make all the world tributary to Rome.

You will recall that Judas Maccabeus entered into an alliance with Rome before his death. His death broke the alliance to some extent. Rome, however, never deserted the interests of one who had sought her aid. For weal or for woe, the two peoples were now blended together. In this welding of the two nations, the Asmonean dynasty was destined to pass away and the Herodian family to come into control of the Jewish state. The Herodian family, for a century, played a most conspicuous part in Jewish history. Its members witnessed the birth



CÆSAREA-PHILIPPI, SITE OF HEROD'S CASTLE.



of Jesus and the career of the Apostolic Church. They came into contact with the Asmonean dynasty, married into it and exterminated the family.

The line the Herodians followed was a policy of unfaltering loyalty to Rome. The founder of the house was Antipas, an Idumean, who was made governor of Idumea by Alexander Jannæus, the king of the Jews. Antipas was succeeded by Antipater, a man of strong will and of great ambition. Hyrcanus the II. was now on the throne; a weak, vacillating prince. Antipater perceived his opportunity in the vacillating will of Hyrcanus. A war for the throne broke out between Hyrcanus II. and his brother Aristobulus. The former was compelled to renounce not only his kingly but his priestly rank by his successful kinsman. Antipater induced Hyrcanus to escape from Jerusalem and to assert his claims to his former rank. This cemented the friendship of the two men.

The course of events was interrupted by a new actor on the scene. This was no less a person than Pompey the Great, the idol of the Roman nation, and the pride of the Roman Senate. Pompey moved toward Palestine with an untarnished splendor. He had just completed his great victory over Mithridates, the wonderful and marvelous king of Pontus, Asia. At Antioch, he had dissolved the Syrian empire, on the ground that it was no longer effectual as a rampart against its own enemies and those of Rome.

While Pompey was dissolving a nation at Antioch, the two rivals, Hyrcanus and Aristobulus, hastened to greet him. Pompey was great and magnanimous, becoming the arbiter between contending princes and kings. He carried in his person the venerable look of age, yet possessed a manly beauty which made him the observed of all observers. He had a clear eye, a charming yet dignified manner. He was so singularly engaging in his life that even those to whom he refused favor, went away satisfied and even blessed.

Before this man, appeared the two contestants. First came Aristobulus, robed with a barbaric splendor and possessed of all the beauty of the Maccabees. Around him were his young men, brilliant in scarlet mantles. His offering, which he laid at Pompey's feet, was the talk of Rome. It was a golden vine, bearing the name of the father, Alexander.

Pompey was a man of uncorrupted taste, and, turning from all this in disgust, he looked on the brother Hyrcanus. While Hyrcanus was as insignificant as his brother was magnificent, yet he had keen men with him, the leader of whom was Antipater, who suggested to Pompey that Aristobulus was not a genuine friend of Rome. He rose above all



THE CASTLE OF SUBEIBEH, CÆSAREA-PHILIPPI.

and guided all. He was laying those plans which colored and formed the last phase of the existence of the Jewish nation.

Antipater was the father of Herod the Great—a descendant of Esau. In him the old prophecy was to be fulfilled, that “Esau would break off the yoke of Jacob.” The descendants of Esau were now about to carve out their fortunes with the sword. Antipater perceived that he could hope nothing from the kingly Aristobulus, but knew that he could rule the weak Hyrcanus. Pompey listened to the adroit pleading of the wily Antipater. Hyrcanus was chosen over Aristobulus. But Aristobulus did not surrender without a struggle. He left his family





THE ASSASSINATION OF JULIUS CÆSAR.



stronghold where he had retired, then made a dash for Jerusalem, entered the city and defied Pompey and all the rest.

Pompey moved down on the city. Aristobulus endeavored to make a treaty with the Romans, but was seized and held as a prisoner. In spite of this the city withstood a siege of three months. At the fall of Jerusalem, Aristobulus and others were taken as hostages to Rome, to grace the third Triumph of Pompey, the greatest spectacle the Roman people ever witnessed. Hyrcanus was made High Priest and, after a Roman conference, the Jewish kingdom was confined to Judea. During all these events Antipater was rising in favor, influence and power. He, as well as Hyrcanus, was ever loyal to Pompey. But when the latter was defeated by Julius Cæsar at Pharsalia, Antipater was so wily that Cæsar confirmed Hyrcanus as High Priest, but gave Antipater a more solid gift. He made him procurator of Judea. This was 47 B. C. This satisfied his ambition, for he was not only rewarded with office, but the great honor of Roman citizenship was conferred upon him. He had a son, Herod by name, who at fifteen years of age became a prominent figure in the world. A seer prophesied that he would some day be "The King of the Jews."

When Herod grew to manhood he chose for his teacher and private secretary that eminent scholar Nicolas of Damascus. Nicolas was one of the accomplished men of the day. Herod loved to talk with him on government, philosophy and history, and did so with great learning. Soon after the gift of citizenship had been conferred on his father, Herod was made procurator of Galilee and Cœle-Syria. He showed his capacity to govern by reducing the provinces to order, ridding them of robbers, and bringing them back to great prosperity. He was hailed as a deliverer by the Galileans, and as a successful leader by the rulers at Rome. After the assassination of Julius Cæsar, whose respect he had won, he gained the regard both of Antony and Augustus. By a turn of ill fortune, Herod was driven out of his adopted home. He carried his family and all that he could gather together into his native hills. That was a hard journey, one which he never forgot. His indomitable spirit was almost broken by the trials. He fought battle after battle. On the spot where he gained success over his pursuers, and to commemorate his safety, he erected a fortress and burial place. Though he had frequently won battles, he was not secure here. Over-



PANORAMA OF CANA.

whelming numbers compelled him to move further and further toward the wilderness of Petra. Having placed his family and kindred here in safety, he hastened to Rome. Cleopatra endeavored to detain him at Alexandria, but her blandishments failed. He braved the Mediterranean, then full of storm and danger.

When he arrived in Rome, he laid his troubles before Mark Antony. Before he left, Antony and Augustus offered him the crown of Judah. He entered the Roman Senate a citizen; when he left it, he was hailed "King of the Jews." On his return, with the aid of Roman troops he stormed and took Jerusalem. Seeing the sack and massacre that would ensue, he personally bought off the Roman soldiers from their plunder, saying: "The dominion of the whole civilized world would not compensate me for the destruction of my subjects." But he still pursued his enemies of rank, with a vindictiveness which showed he had learned much from his friends the Romans. Amidst his perplexities, he moved with great adroitness and genius.

At the insistence of his wife Mariamne, Aristobulus, her brother, was made High Priest. The glorious beauty of the Maccabees seemed to culminate in Mariamne and Aristobulus. Alexandra, their mother,

was called by Herod "the wisest of women." Her ambition, however, got the better of her judgment. After Aristobulus had been raised to the exalted rank, she saw that she had made a mistake, so planned with Cleopatra of Egypt to have her son escape and get away from danger. But the very steps she took to insure his safety precipitated his destruction. He was but seventeen years of age; tall and commanding. As he appeared before the people, his transcendent beauty, set off by the gorgeous robes of his office, coupled with the fact that he was a Maccabean, moved the hearts of the people in his favor.

All this excited Herod's suspicions. When the feast was over, Aristobulus was invited to the palace of his mother amid the groves and palms of Jericho, where Herod received him with great gaiety of spirit. It was a warm day in autumn. The heat was great. As the boy stood beside the large baths watching soldiers, guests and slaves as they plunged and played in the waters, he was persuaded to bathe with them.

Accepting their adroit banter, he entered the waters. They plunged,



THE MOSQUE OF OMAR, AT JERUSALEM.



swam and dived with him. In tropical regions darkness comes as the sun goes down. At sunset Aristobulus' life went out. Josephus speaks of his plunge as a "baptism." It was a plunge into death. Darkness and death came together. And Herod himself wept when he looked on the beautiful body and face, though his guardsmen at his own instigation had drowned him. From that day the tragedy of death widened in his own household. In the larger arena, Antony and Augustus battled for the Roman empire. All was dark, everywhere. In the midst of intrigue, his wife, Mariamne, stood aloof from all that was base. She was pure, lofty and womanly.

Herod had been faithful to Antony in his struggle with Augustus. After the battle of Actium, Herod hastened to Rome, saying that he had been faithful to Antony, and on the ground of that faithfulness besought Augustus to confirm him as king. Augustus was won by his frankness, and granted him his request. Hastening home, he sought out Mariamne. In his great love for her he told her with joy of his success. But she turned from him with horror, reproaching him for the murder of her brother. The enemies of Mariamne saw their opportunity and poisoned the mind of Herod against her, which culminated in her death and that of her mother.

Mariamne had always been frank. She had spoken boldly. Had she been left alone, she would doubtless have appealed to the deeper and generous nature of Herod. She had defended her kindred, but never, like her mother, had descended to plots. The mother and daughter were in marked contrast. The daughter who had never descended to artifice now stood serene and full of courage. The mother, who had used every art, device and plot, was completely unnerved. She endeavored to clear herself by cowardly reproaching her daughter and justifying the king.

Mariamne smiled, uttered no word, but went to her death like a Maccabee. The best thing which can be said for the memory of Mariamne is the utterance of her husband, who in his passionate remorse and wild grief made addresses to her in loving words. He called society about him; scholars of the realm; the soldiers. He entered on the chase, and to distract him from his grief commanded all to address her as if she were still alive. He was plunged into the deepest melancholy, from which he was aroused only by plots against his life and his throne.

The second period of his life was devoted to architecture. Once firmly seated on his throne, his great intellect sought fields of new activity. This became an era of splendor and munificence. He created Jericho in the midst of the palms, a grove eight miles long and three miles wide. This tropical paradise, with its glory of palaces and baths, was the story which the Roman soldier liked to tell in the barracks at Rome. Samaria again became a famous and beautiful city; fortresses



THE TOWER OF PRAYER IN THE OUTER COURT OF THE MOSQUE OF OMAR.

sprang up in every direction. Herod became the patron and builder of temples not only in his own kingdom but in other lands.

His two most notable works were the city of Cæsarea on the Mediterranean and the re-construction of the Temple in Jerusalem. On a lonely spot on the Mediterranean coast, marked only by a tower, called Stratos, and a small village at its feet, he constructed a great port. Here he built breakwaters and piers to make the haven secure. Here he erected a city so magnificent that Jerusalem became secondary to it. The buildings, private and public, were so beautiful that it soon be-



DEDICATION OF SAMUEL.



came the capital of Syria and Palestine. It was in the form of a crescent on rising ground. Out of the palaces of shining marble a temple arose, dedicated to Augustus. From the face of the temple, looking toward the sea, there were two great statues, one of Augustus, the other of Jupiter, equal in size. The land everywhere bloomed with cities, towns, temples and fortresses: a spring of architecture. But his most memorable work was his reconstruction of the Temple at Jerusalem. Tradition has placed this magnificent work as a penitent offering for his sins. That would be much like Herod.

He had the many scruples of the people to meet, but this was successfully done by an old scholar, who said: "I see a breach in the old building which makes its repair necessary." On the pretense of repair the old Temple was made new. No service was interrupted, and though re-created the Temple of Herod was supposed to be that of Zerubbabel. A thousand wagons were employed. There were ten thousand skilled workmen, among whom were a thousand priests who worked in their priestly garments.

The national mind was absorbed by the work and the people believed that God interposed to keep the rain from falling in the day and that the morning winds blew the clouds away. The more sacred portions of the building were completed in a year and a half. The other portions took eight years. For eighty years after, additions were made, but it was deemed completed in about nine years from the beginning of the work, and was dedicated by Herod with great pomp. As the sun rose in glory upon the vast white cloud of marble, it well merited the words: "He who has not seen the building of Herod has never seen a beautiful thing."

In addition to these things and during this time Herod alleviated the distress of widespread famine by generous, even munificent, gifts and by great personal exertions. During these years, Herod was winning golden opinions from the emperor and was growing in favor all over the world. He gave every evidence of loyalty and happiness to the empire, such as his aid to the army of the pro-consul in Egypt in 24 B. C. He sent his two sons, Alexander and Aristobulus, to be educated at Rome, where Augustus showed them marked favor and invited them to live in his palace. Their teacher was Pollio, a friend of Virgil. The emperor added large tracts to Herod's dominions, con-

sidered him his best friend next to Agrippa. This ended the second period of his life, extending from 28 to 14 B. C.

The third period constituted ten years, and with this his life went out. They were gloomy years, made wretched by domestic trouble and darkened by suspicion. Herod's court, with his many wives, eunuchs, slaves and courtiers, was the scene of intrigue and strife. His two beautiful sons, Alexander and Aristobulus, sons of Mariamne, were the first to feel the storm. They came from Rome with all the polish which such associations gave them and with all the stately beauty of the Maccabean blood. The people were wildly enthusiastic over them. This moved the jealous nature of Herod. His son Antipater, his oldest child, was the demon of the house, and watching his opportunity, sowed seeds of division between father and children till Herod ordered the execution of the two beautiful boys. When the Emperor Augustus recalled their lives, so full of promise, with the tragedy of their end, he said: "I would rather be Herod's hog than Herod's son."

Herod's anxieties, his losses and his sins, broke him down and he fell into incurable disease. He lay sick in the palace of Jericho, where memory haunted every room. He had no peace. Shadows lay thick on his path. But now to check disease and save life, if possible, he was borne from Jericho's palms and walls to one of the most beautiful spots in the Holy Land where there was a spring, a hot sulphur spring, rising out of a deep ravine on the eastern shore of the Dead Sea. There, in the Callirhoe, or "Beautiful Stream," the king endeavored to wash away his sickness and become clean. As he lay in the waters, he saw the fortress, which was also to become his burial place, and knew that he gazed on his tomb. His search for health was in vain. He lay dead at last beneath the purple robe, on which rested the scepter and the crown.

Herod gave a glory to the kingdom such as it had never seen, perhaps, even in the days of David and Solomon. The dynasty gave to the world men of great intellect, of great talent and undoubted genius for ruling. The genius of Herod, if surrounded with different environments, if given a larger field, would have shown him to be, as he was, the greatest man of his age. But with the gifts of the family, there was combined an unscrupulousness, licentiousness and ambition which has hardly any parallel in history. A nemesis of defied law seemed to

follow the family. It was during the reign of Herod that Jesus was born. A strange restlessness and expectation were in the hearts of men. With the death of the Asmoneans, the people turned again to the line of David. The expectation grew that a deliverer would come. Prayers were added to the ritual, beseeching God to restore the royal dynasty of David to the Jews.

The Romans heard that a conquering hero and king would rise out of Judah. Some of them believed the rumor. Many elements were at work to create a new time. Would it come? The so-called great



BETHLEHEM.

men did not look for much. But the poets were moved by it, as well as the pious and the peasants of the world. What would happen? An innocent child came whom they named Jesus. He grew into an inquiring Boy; then into a Man, "who knew what was in man." He spake as never man spake before. When Jesus came, Herod the Great was taken by surprise. The world in a way was surprised too. Herod tried to kill Him, but He escaped with his parents and went to Egypt. When Herod died the parents of Jesus were told to return to the Holy Land, "for they are dead who sought the young child's life." As the babe was being carried into the Holy Land the dead body of Herod



was being borne to its tomb. The old time died with Herod. The new time was born with Jesus.

And now in conclusion I want to say to all who read this book that the Bible is the source of law and liberty as it exists in the world to-day. We cannot be true students of our time and nation without a knowledge of this book—The Book of Books. There has never been a book written on any subject that is not affected by the teachings of the Bible in some way. Its influence, like the atmosphere, is in and about us. It has woven itself into the very fiber of the steel of our bridges, the woof of the cloth in the loom, the windows of our houses, into the pictures on our walls, and into the Mother's lullaby as she rocks the cradle of the world. The lonely missionary and disciple are to-day placing it in all the various tropics of the world, that all, rich and poor, educated and ignorant, may be benefited by it.

We have gone carefully through the Old Testament, and have been brought face to face with the greatest figures of all ages. We now reach the *New Testament*, where we come face to face with the Man of Galilee, whose influence affects every thought and issue of the world to-day. If I can lead you to study the life of this Man—the greatest of all Men—and follow his teachings, then I have done the greatest favor one life can do another.



